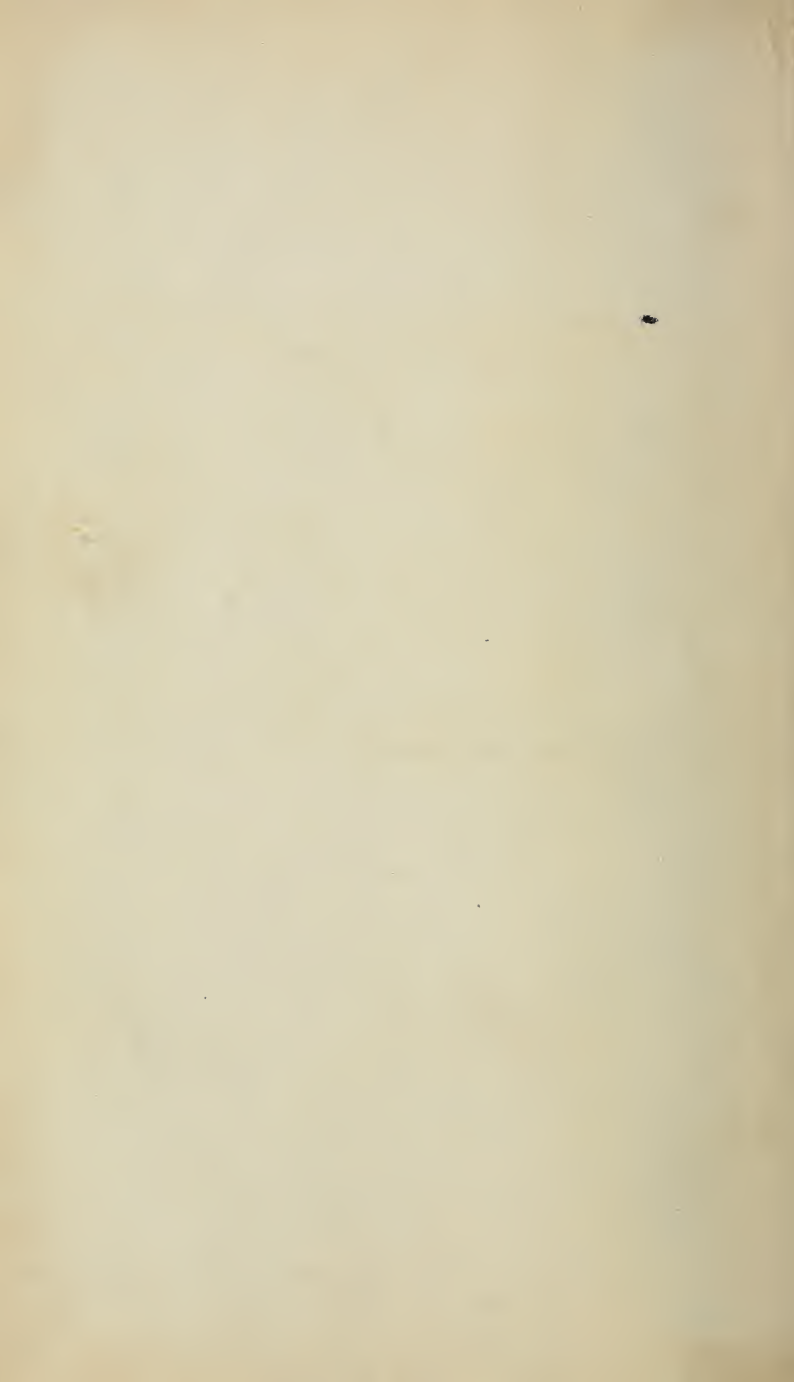


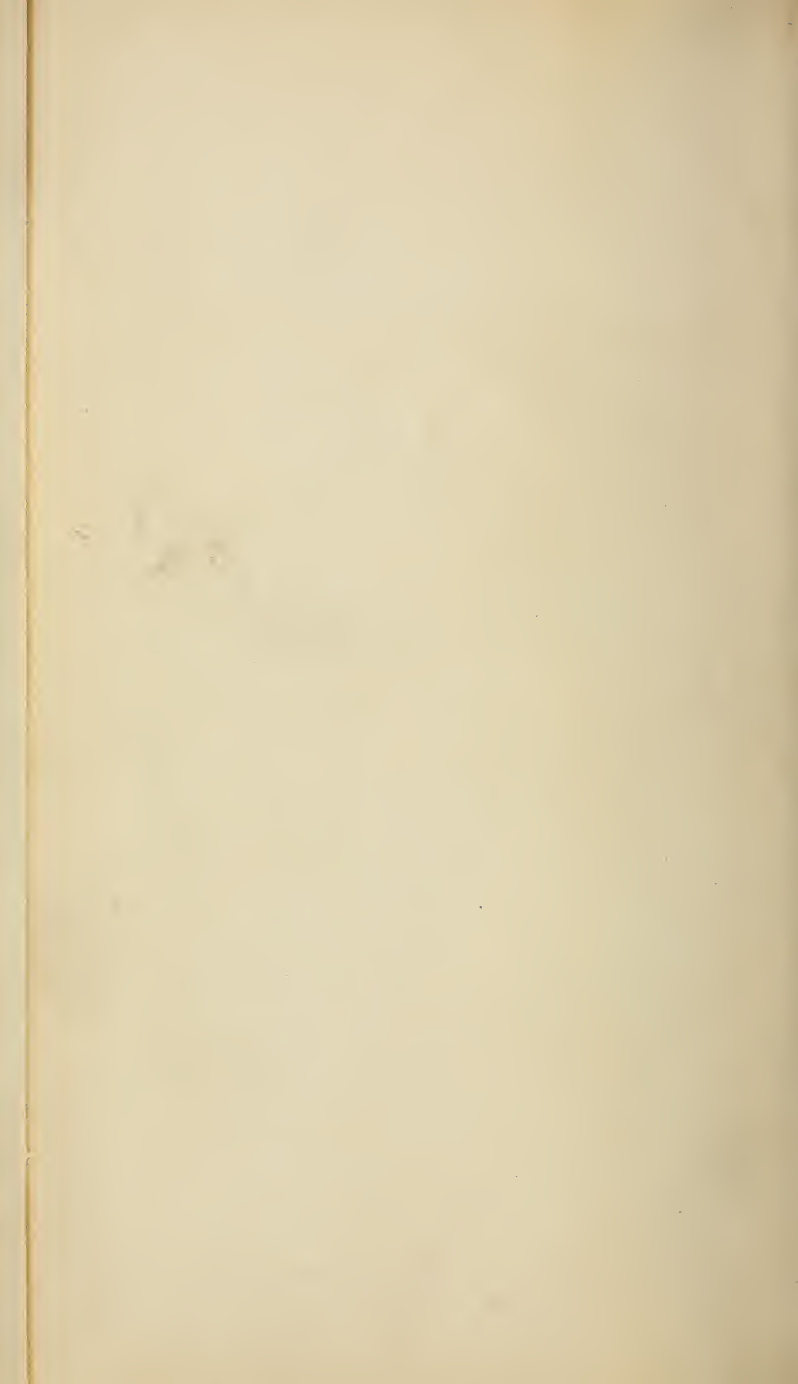
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





IRELAND,
AND
THE IRISH CHURCH:

ITS
PAST AND PRESENT STATE, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS.

BY THE
RIGHT HON. LORD VISCOUNT *✓*Lifford^{it}.

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P R E F A C E.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of the following pages have been written five or six years; and the subject of them has occasionally occupied the author's attention a much longer period.

It seemed strange, that although Ireland has been contemplated with deep, it may be said, with affectionate interest by British statesmen of all parties for above forty years, no progress seemed to be made in conciliating her Roman Catholic population. During that period great commercial advantages were conceded to her. First, free trade with England in corn was given to her, and various other concessions followed, which were at last completed by her being acknowledged as an integral part of the kingdom, and her trade considered and treated as a coasting trade, which

opened the British markets to the whole of her produce. Wealth has increased no doubt in consequence, but contentment has not followed ; and in the South, peace and security seem as remote as ever. The conciliating policy of one administration, amounting almost to timidity, and by the Protestants often contemplated as injustice, seemed to produce no other effect than praise, of which the sincerity did not seem quite certain, and was even less efficacious in producing peace, and giving security, than the more vigorous proceedings of some of their predecessors. It would appear, therefore, that those who influenced the majority of the lower orders had something in view which could not yet be confessed, which was extrinsic of the peace and prosperity of the country ; which it was the object, as it was no doubt the interest, of the Government to promote ; and which the peculiar circumstances of the country made it impossible to concede. The evil appeared not to have been contemplated in its full extent ; and the reference sometimes made to foreign countries, where the monarch and his people differed on the subject of religion, led to

the supposition that a mistake had been made in considering any of those cases analogous to the circumstances of Ireland, where not only the monarch and the majority of the other governing powers, differ from a large proportion of the people; but what is more important, the owners of the soil, the holders of property, and one half of the population of a whole province, are of a different religion from the majority in the other three provinces. This mistake would partly account for the failure, by shewing that the Government of Ireland experiences difficulties which are not met with in any other country in the world. It is true the Rhenish provinces of Prussia are Roman Catholic, and the Government is zealously and sincerely Protestant; but in these provinces the great proprietors are almost exclusively Roman Catholic. The cases are not therefore analogous; and if they were in other respects, it is not pretended that a distinction could be made between the province of Ulster and the other provinces of Ireland. Nor does it appear so certain as was supposed, that a perfect harmony exists between the Romish

hierarchy on the Rhine and the king's government.

Another difficulty arises from Ireland having been governed, subsequently to the rebellion of 1641, till about fifty years ago, under the influence of a Parliament elected solely by the Protestants, with a view almost exclusively to the promotion of Protestantism. Their measures, not always the most justifiable, were seldom the most prudent; but, in consequence, strange contrasts are exhibited between the proceedings and even the pledges of those days, and the policy of modern times; a disposition was cultivated in former times among the Protestant population, which has been treated as criminal at a later period, without any great pains being taken to reconcile them to the difference.

Since Ireland has been a subject of interest, much has been said of the wrongs of Ireland; and she has a fearful account to bring against England of former injustice. But it has seldom occurred to those who would redress these wrongs, that they originated in the desire of the English conquerors to establish the Romish religion; and that

the English conquest itself emanated from the Roman Pontiff, whose great object it was to establish the religion of Rome in the other provinces, as fully and devotedly as it had been for some time established in the Danish colony of Leinster and its dependencies. This led the Author to an investigation of what was the religion of the ancient Irish? a much debated question; and the result of the research will be found in the following pages. These considerations were naturally followed by a review of the steps taken to effect a reformation of the Church both in England and Ireland? and it is hoped that the result will satisfy a candid inquirer, that the Church is not, in either country, the creation of an Act of Parliament; but, on the contrary, that the Reformation was the work of the proper ecclesiastical authorities, in the early stages of which the most prominent Roman Catholic authorities fully concurred.

It was with great satisfaction, that the Author found, in the course of these inquiries, that the first attempt at a milder and more just course of proceeding towards the Irish, fol-

lowed immediately after the Reformation ; shewing that sound principles and true religion produced their proper fruits,—that love of man which the Scripture represents as inseparable from a real love of God. It is true, this beneficent spirit was checked by the rebellion of 1641, and a different policy arose from the contest for the Crown subsequent to the Revolution of 1688 ; but religion had declined during the same period, and with its revival arose a desire to benefit the Irish people. A long course of neglect, and centuries of misgovernment, however, had made the task infinitely difficult, and still imposes difficulties which time alone can remove. England forced the Roman Catholic religion on the Irish ; and when she proposed to them the Reformation, she took no pains to instruct them ; but, on the contrary, addressed them in a language which not only they did not understand, but against which they had many, and not unfounded, prejudices. For a long time they were not admitted to the same commercial advantages as the sister country ; and the poverty, which was the natural consequence of these restrictions, has divided her popu-

lation into two classes, and deprived property of the security which it enjoys in England from the imperceptible gradations of society ; a circumstance to which England is more indebted than possibly may at first sight appear ; and of which, among her manufacturing population, there is great danger she may be deprived ; as in a short time, in the manufacturing districts, there will only be the great manufacturer and the operative ; enormous wealth and squalid poverty ; a contrast which must be injurious to that good understanding and good feeling which should exist between the different gradations of society, and must make the happiness of both classes depend upon what can rarely be expected, the existence of great forbearance, under privation, on one side, and great moderation, with abundant charity, on the other ; whereas, when society is divided by imperceptible gradations, it enjoys all the advantages, without the disadvantages, of equality ; as the different degrees are in the agricultural districts in England so intermixed as to give mutual support and a feeling of mutual interest.

If the view taken of the state of Ireland, in the following pages, is in any degree correct, she does

not require powerful remedies ; on the contrary they will be injurious to her ; she requires repose. The most beneficial change would be injurious if it were to be effected by agitation, and by exciting dispositions already too prone to excitement. She wants patience on the part of her Government. No remedies they can apply will remove the difficulties she labours under. They cannot make those who possess the property, and those who in the three Provinces are the numerical majority, of one religion ; they cannot change the character of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, who, separated by the policy of that Church from secular ties, have only in view its aggrandizement. The Government cannot reconcile their pretensions with the claims of the Protestant proprietors, or the engagements of former Governments ; they must wait till these pretensions are found impracticable ; and in the meantime outrage must be prevented, and agitation discountenanced. The people also must have patience ; they must shew consideration for the difficulties experienced by their Government. The Roman Catholics must moderate their unreasonable expectations ; and the Protestants must not impute a desire to encourage Roman Catholic

insubordination to the efforts made for exercising impartial justice.

Every act of the Government is viewed in a quite different light by the two parties into which Ireland is divided. They must be aware of this, that they may not give ground for the imputation of partiality. But the parties themselves must endeavour candidly to interpret the acts of the Government. When official Englishmen first go to Ireland, they reside in a Roman Catholic part of Ireland, and they naturally consider it a Roman Catholic country. This is a great mistake. But, on the other hand, Protestants, who fifty years ago were alone considered, and with whose ancestors serious obligations were contracted, must understand that it is impossible any longer to exclude such a numerous class as their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects from equal rights (so far as is consistent with positive former engagements) and equal justice under every circumstance. The wealth, peace, property, and happiness of Ireland depends on the different sections of her population shewing moderation and mutual forbearance.

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IRELAND,

AND THE IRISH CHURCH.

It is usual to hear Ireland spoken of with a shew of deep concern. "That unhappy country," is a phrase common to her real as well as her pretended friends; but when it is used few contemplate, and fewer still are aware, that she has had a claim to their compassion, from the earliest period of her existence. She was peopled by successive colonizations; and apparently not by peaceful settlers in search of a residence, but by warlike tribes, who, having commenced a wandering life, from motives which cannot now be ascertained, at last placed themselves in Ireland, and generally made aggression on those tribes which had preceded them.

The best authorities are of opinion that the first settlers were of Celtic origin. It is not necessary to consider the fabulous stories which are connected with the Bardic account of the first colo-

nists ; except that ultimately to obtain something like dates, we may mention that they are said to have been headed by a chief of the name of Japhet ; and the second attempt at colonization was made, about the time of the patriarch Jacob, by a race called Numidians, who attacked a tribe of pirates, called Formosians, who were settled upon an island on the coast of Ulster ; but the Numidians being defeated, the country was left to the mercy of the Formosians for 200 years.

The next colonists and conquerors were the Belgæ, probably from Germany, who established the five monarchies of Ireland ; but these were conquered in the space of about thirty years by the Daneans, who came from the north of Europe ; and these were conquered by the Milesian or Scotie race, some say 1300 years, some 1000, and others about 400 years before our Saviour.

There were other colonists ; but as far as the maze of such early history can be disentangled, except with great labour, these were the principal settlers, but, no question, at a period very different from the pretended dates. The Scotie colony had no sooner gained a complete victory over the Daneans, than a bitter controversy commenced among the conquerors, and the two sons of Milesius disputed for the possession of a

valley of singular beauty ; and in the subsequent contest, the eldest, Heber, lost his life, and the survivor began a new contest with his remaining brother, in which he was also victorious. What was the state of Ireland from that time, till the five kingdoms were dissolved by Hugony the Great, does not appear ; but the abdication of authority, by the five minor sovereigns, was rescinded under Acty Fidloch, and the ancient five restored.

The existence of these five monarchs, as may be supposed, led to perpetual wars. A spirit of revolt also broke out among the Belgic tribes, who were confined to the province of Connaught ; and Mr. Moore, who is here my chief authority, says : “ Under the Scotie rule, not only were the great mass of the old Celtic population held in subjection by the sword, but also the descendants of the foreign settlers, the remains of the conquered Belgic tribes, were wholly excluded from every share in the administration of public affairs, and treated in every respect as a servile and Helot class.”

To what period, therefore, are we to go back, in search of the wrongs of Ireland ? where did they originate ? and how is it possible, to charge any of her numerous conquerors with having been peculiarly guilty ? And if we are asked, from whence came wars and fightings among them,

which abound from the time of Heber, the son of Milesius, to the monarch of one hundred battles, we can only answer, in the language of Scripture, "from their lusts;" from the desire of power or the desire of gain. They had passions like other men; but no great legislator seems to have arisen among them, and seldom even a great chieftain, who could keep order by the sword. Ollamh Jodhla is said to have established useful institutions; but the most important survived him but a short time. The triennial convention of Tara survived, but it is not clear that it was very efficacious.

Inathal established a court of civil jurisdiction for the regulation of tradesmen and artificers. Jeodhlim was the first, A. D. 250, to abolish the law of retaliation; and Mr. Moore tells us that Cormar Ulfadha was "the only one of the few sensible princes which the line of Milesius produced, who was able to inspire sufficient respect for his institutions, to secure their existence beyond his own life-time." We look in vain for an Alfred, who would at once enact good laws, and devise a system by which they might be enforced.—If, therefore, anarchy has frequently prevailed in Ireland, and if they are a people prone to dissension, we must not look for the cause in modern times. There have been bitter and bloody differences between Protestants and Roman Catholics; but dissension did

not commence at the time of the Reformation. There were wars between the English settlers and the aboriginal inhabitants; but they were not the first who disputed for the soil of Ireland. —There were differences between the Romish missionaries and the earlier Christians, as to the time of celebrating Easter and other matters; but this was the least bloody quarrel which Ireland had known. It may be, the chieftain who invited the interposition of the Romans, or the king who brought in the English, were not so deficient in patriotism as may at first sight appear. Any rule would seem better than anarchy; and it may have appeared an act of patriotism to introduce order, even though it was to be enforced by a foreign power.

If Ireland has been subject to violent internal contests, she has no less been the object of bitter dissension among those who were concerned in her government. For centuries, Ireland was held in little estimation; and since she has come into notice, she has been made the subject, on which to exercise the crude theories of speculative philosophers, and been the instrument for promoting the separate objects of party politicians, or the self-interest of private individuals. That she should have been neglected for a time is not a matter of surprise.

Ireland produced little revenue ; did not afford much trade ; was, as to intercourse, practically more distant than at present, and had little comparative influence on the political prosperity of the sister country. But it is one extraordinary feature in her case, that a large proportion of those for whom an interest is now claimed, and has really been excited, and on whose behalf the wrongs and injuries of Ireland are often pleaded (I mean the Irish Roman Catholics),—a large proportion of these are actually the descendants, not of the oppressed, but of the oppressors.

The Pale, as it was called, was an English colony. Much of Munster was also colonised by the English ; and the population of those two districts, who are generally Roman Catholics, comprise a very large proportion of those on whose behalf these appeals are made, which set forth the oppressions of the ancestors of these very men ; but in point of fact, a careful examination would shew, that there is very little unmixed Irish blood, except in the province of Connaught.

The wrongs of Ireland are spoken of, as if they proceeded all from the same hand, were inflicted on the same persons, and originated in the same source ; whereas, at different times, all these circumstances were different.

For some time after the conquest the contest

was, as usual in Ireland, between the conquerors and the conquered,—between the colonists and the aboriginal inhabitants,—which continued even after another element of discord was let in, that is, the difference of religion. The aboriginal inhabitants, indeed, made use of that powerful incentive to strengthen their hands; and at last, by uniting the colonists of the Roman Catholic persuasion to the ancient Irish, a new character was given to the national differences; and though there was still a dislike to British connexion on one side, and a feeling on the other, that safety was only to be found in the protection of the sister country, these differences were increased, and mutual dislike promoted, by the opposition in the religious opinions of the parties; and the quarrel continued for a long time to be, and perhaps is still, partly religious and partly political.

Possibly one reason, why all the remedies proposed for Ireland have failed, and why all the conciliation which has been used, has produced no calm in the passions of the people, is to be found in the difficulties which such a state of affairs presents, under the present circumstances of the Irish population. It has been the great misfortune of Ireland, that her interests have been considered as if they were the affairs of one people, like the

Scots or the English ; but they are not, nor were they ever at any time, one people.

The province of Ulster resembles much more the lowlands of Scotland than any other part of Ireland ; and though not entirely Protestant, yet so large a proportion of her lowest population are Protestant, and her highest and middle ranks are so exclusively of that persuasion, that she may be considered as a Protestant country. How, then, is it possible to legislate for Ireland as a Roman Catholic country, even if you could put out of consideration the majority of the higher orders, and the scattered Protestant population in the other three Provinces ? Yet this is evidently the aim of the Roman Catholic priesthood, and of those who have any purpose apart from self-interest, among her agitators. And this is one reason, why you have never given satisfaction, by all the measures which have been proposed, by way of conciliating Ireland. What you have done, has given no satisfaction to the Roman Catholics, being short of what they require ; and it has given dissatisfaction to the Protestants, because almost every measure has had in view the most numerous, but the least intelligent and least wealthy, portion of the population.

It is not meant that the views on either side have been unexceptionably reasonable ; it is only in-

tended to state a fact, without at present justifying or blaming the parties. It is no wonder, therefore that Ireland should present so many political anomalies, and such practical difficulties in the way of the statesmen who would heal her divisions, and benefit her condition.

What is demanded on the part of the numerical majority, is denied on the part of those who possess the weight of property? What is asked for three provinces, is rejected by a fourth, and by an intelligent and wealthy minority in the other three. Take, for instance, the payment of the Roman Catholic priesthood. You raise conscientious objections, on the part of the religious portion of the Protestant population; and, while you satisfy the claim made on the part of a majority, in only a part of Ireland, you do violence to property, which has long been vested in the Protestant establishment, and infringe a positive engagement, entered into by the Act of Union, which should be inviolable, as having the force of a treaty, between two parties which have ceased to exist. And further: in seeking to relieve those who only nominally contribute to a clergy whom they do not acknowledge, you in most cases force the landlords—from whose estates the property of the Church is always really, and is now literally, deducted—to transfer those payments, from a Church which they do ac-

knowledge, to one which many of them have pronounced, and some believe to be, heretical; and thus, in avoiding an imaginary injustice, you perpetuate a real one. But, on the other hand, you have—and must, I fear, continue to have—a body of men in the most influential situations, with whom the government have no influence, but who will always be hostile, so long as there is even a chance that, in the various changes which agitation may produce, or the experiments which despair may suggest, a change in the hierarchy may at last be tried. But would their success bring peace? Are the clergy of France attached to the Orleans dynasty, or that of Portugal or Spain to the Constitutional government? Could a conscientious Roman Catholic priesthood be attached to a Protestant and Constitutional government? They may be liberal, so long as their interests are those of Dissenters generally; they may make common cause with those with whom they differ as widely as the poles. But give them authority; let the common object be once accomplished; and then they can never concur with those who would give education; and they can never love institutions which would leave their population open to instruction and proselytism. And remaining, as the Roman Catholic clergy must ever remain, an insulated order, cut off from the social enjoyments

of life, owning a foreign head, and, as it were, under a separate government, they would still prove an untractable, if not a hostile body ; with an acknowledged, instead of an usurped authority, and with rights which they would not be slow to assert, and, if possible, to extend ; while the difference between them and the Protestants would become more bitter, as none of the circumstances which occasion them would be removed, and the parties would feel themselves more on an equality. The minds of the Protestants would be exasperated ; they would think that the conditions had been violated under which their ancestors had become colonists in Ireland. The friends of good order and government would be alienated, while its enemies would not be conciliated.

In saying this, however, there is no intention to cast blame in any quarter ; the difficulties which surround the Irish question are too great, and the failure has been too uniform, to make it a matter of peculiar blame to any administration, that they have not succeeded. Neither is there any intention of charging all the Roman Catholics with being the enemies of good order. Some have shewn themselves so, and evince a spirit of discontent ; but there are others who know and appreciate the value of a well ordered State, even under a Protestant government. Another difficulty, however,

presents itself, in considering the state of Ireland in this point of view.

Most of those who have taken an interest in the prospects of that country, have entertained sanguine hopes of the good effects which may result from the diffusion of education. Some have believed, that benefit may be derived from mere intellectual improvement, and from the acquisition of the power of reading. Others have thought, that if the object is to improve the moral condition of the people, and to give juster notions of moral good and evil, your system of education must be essentially religious, and its object must be to give religious knowledge, and at the same time to cultivate the religious affections. And, I confess, if that part of the Creed of all orthodox Christians (not excepting the Roman Catholics) is correct, which represents the human character as naturally depraved, and man as by nature very far gone from original righteousness;—and if, as is asserted by all orthodox Protestants, whether by Churchmen or Dissenters, (and I believe by Roman Catholics) that man cannot turn and do works pleasing to God except by the grace of God preventing him;—if this doctrine is true, I cannot see that a mere knowledge of reading and writing will cure the original corruption; or that any intellectual cultivation, which does not teach from whence the

remedy is to come, can cure the moral inability under which man naturally labours. And if knowledge is power, it is impossible to believe that power will prove useful, and be well directed, in the hands of those who are still inclined to evil, and who must be unable to apply a remedy, while unacquainted with the only source from which they can derive a cure. But, even if mere intellectual cultivation were a remedy, is it certain that the Roman Catholic priesthood are willing to place this power, to an unlimited extent, in the hands of their people? I know that they have favoured, in a degree, the new system of education; but I know also, that it has been asserted, (with what correctness I am unable from my own knowledge to state, but it is asserted) by credible persons, that they have favoured the new system, because, in many instances, it has afforded support to their own schools, where they have been able to adhere to the letter of the regulations, that no peculiarities of religion should be taught, while they have successfully evaded its spirit, by teaching the appropriate doctrines of the Romish creed, as exclusively as they did, previous to their obtaining assistance from the public funds. But be this as it may, the real question is this, Will the Roman Catholics support a system of education, which

does not either directly or indirectly maintain their religion?

I know there is a difference of opinion on this point; but again, can any system of education, which will leave the Roman Catholic religion and the Roman Catholic population as they are at present, with respect to religious information, be conducive to the well-being of Ireland?

Another question presents itself. Suppose that the Roman Catholic clergy will support a system, which has only in view the intellectual improvement of the people. But can such really be beneficial? It will, I have no doubt, shake the Roman Catholic religion to the very foundation; and, in consequence, truth will be rejected on account of its fellowship, in that instance, with falsehood. But can the country be benefited by the exchange of superstition for infidelity? Who will recommend that the people should reject those truths by which, (notwithstanding all the dangerous errors with which they are accompanied) they may lay hold of that salvation which has been provided for them, and take in exchange, not merely a cold and barren system, but plunge into that abyss of darkness, which we know is the prelude to everlasting darkness.

For once I agree with all true Roman Catho-

lics, and prefer their remaining for ever in their present dangerous state of error, than barter it for certain destruction. We come then to this point. If the Roman Catholic clergy do not favour education in any way,—or if they only favour it in such a way as will still leave the people under the influence of the superstitious and erroneous principles of their religion, which will not promote essential improvement;—if they only consent to a system of intellectual cultivation, which merely promotes men's temporal interests, and which, if not rightly directed, will prove infinitely prejudicial to their best interests, by leaving them open to the attacks of infidelity;—in any of these cases the concessions of the Roman Catholic clergy will come short of the views both of Churchmen and Dissenters, who desire to give sound religious education, which shall have truth only for its object, as it is set forth in the Scriptures. When we consider how many individuals feel themselves under a conscientious obligation to promote this object, and how many societies there are, which were established for this interesting purpose, many of which originate among that powerful and influential body, the English Dissenters; is it not obvious that there ever must be continual discord between those institutions and the Roman Catholic clergy; and that, if the Roman Catholic clergy are recog-

nised, and in any degree established, they will be able to resist the benevolent efforts of these persons with much more effect than they do at present. Many will think, this is a consequence not to be deprecated, and having in view that the Roman Catholic religion should be the established religion of Ireland, or of a part of it, as the Presbyterian religion is that of Scotland, they do not object to extend its influence.

But independent of the religious part of this question, the political circumstances of the two countries are different. The property of Scotland was not almost exclusively Episcopal, and she had not a large portion of her population of that persuasion, as is the case in Ireland, and especially in the north, and in the large towns. Besides, there was no very great portion of the population of the empire at large who thought the Presbyterian religion essentially erroneous in its doctrine, and highly prejudicial to the souls of men. This discord between the Roman Catholic clergy, and the different religious bodies, who have it in view to promote religious education in Ireland, is sometimes embarrassing to the government; and it will be ten times more so, if the Roman Catholic religion is partially established. The different religious societies will then intrude on the duties of men who are recognised, and

some whose offices have a legal existence. It will not be an intrusion (as at present, when it occurs with many of the established clergy) on men who, to a certain degree, admit the right of private judgment, and appeal to a common standard of truth; but it will be an invasion of the rights of men, who believe they are themselves the only dispensers of religious truths,—and the very act of interference will be a violation of their religious principles,—and who will therefore consider even the toleration of attempts to instruct their flocks as a breach of the engagements by which they were established; while the parties who have been for years successfully engaged in diffusing religious instruction in Ireland, will consider every obstruction they may meet with as an interference with the spirit of toleration, by which they feel themselves at liberty both to preach and teach what they hold to be essential for their fellow-creatures to know and to believe: and however the English Dissenters may at present (while attracted by other objects) quietly contemplate such a concession to the Roman Catholics, they will hereafter most obstinately resist its effects.

I have avoided the religious question, how far the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion will be prejudicial to the souls of men; for I

address myself chiefly to those who would not easily be convinced on this point; but if a large and influential portion of the community have an objection to such a measure, on such grounds, it appears politically inexpedient to offend their principles,—or, if you will, even their prejudices, and certainly their conscientious objections.

The chance of conciliating the Roman Catholic clergy is uncertain,—scarcely possible, unless they were maintained against any interference with their people, which every day threatens more and more their existence; and the certainty would be incurred, of alienating the orthodox Dissenters, with the great majority of the Church of England. And how could the Protestants of the North of Ireland, or even the minority of the South, contemplate such a measure; and how can they be reconciled to the necessary diminution of their ecclesiastical establishment? Would the Presbyterians of the North be satisfied, who have almost invariably made common cause with the Established Church, being themselves partially established, though not out of the property of the Church. They will naturally object to the elevation of their opponents to a condition perhaps superior to their own.

This brings us to consider the peculiar circumstances under which these people are placed, and which compels a review of the historical events

out of which their present condition originates. But we must first view, what is the present state of Ireland, compared with England.

There is a contest going on in England at present, which originates with a certain class of politicians, with whose sentiments a portion of the middle classes co-operate, whose object it is to allow the aristocracy, higher gentry, and great capitalists, to have little more influence in the direction of the affairs of the nation (in whose welfare they have so deep a stake) than what they may derive from their individual votes. There is also a contest on the part of a majority of the Dissenters, who desire to overthrow the Establish Church, and to leave the kingdom without any national recognition of genuine Christianity. But there is another contest going on in Ireland, for very different purposes, in which the malcontents in England co-operate with those who desire a change, without being aware, I am persuaded, what a difference there is in the sentiments and objects of the chief actors.

In Ireland there is comparatively no middle class; for there the population of the towns bears a small proportion to those of the rural districts; and in the latter, the population is almost entirely gentry and peasantry: and between these bodies there can be no contest for political importance.

The peasantry blindly follow either their landlord, the priest, or the political agitator, for some undefined good, and of which, so far as civil politics are concerned, they know nothing, except that there is to be a change, and that change they hope will be beneficial. But the desire to establish the Roman Catholic church, and the overthrow of the Protestant hierarchy, is the great object of the priesthood,—is sought with more sincerity than any thing else by the political agitator,—and does present some prospect of pecuniary benefit even to the peasant. But how does this harmonize with the voluntary system of the English Dissenters? how does it consort with the abhorrence which the orthodox Dissenter professes for superstition and Popery? Does he believe that the trust reposed in many mediators is derogatory to the one great Mediator? Does he believe that the power of granting absolution is injurious to morals, and leads men away from the true source of pardon? Does he believe that the trust reposed in relics tends to, and the sacrifice of the Mass is practically, idolatry? Does he believe that the doctrine of penance, of pilgrimages to holy places, and a belief in the efficiency of the works of supererogation by departed Saints, leads to a false and dangerous dependance? Does he believe that a reliance on our good works, as a meritorious

cause of salvation,—is incompatible with justification by faith ? And, lastly, does the orthodox Dissenter think that all these dogmas (with such a prolific source of error and never-failing engine of authority,) as that undefined tradition, is of co-equal authority with Holy Scripture ? I say, does he consider all these dogmas injurious to the souls of men, and will he co-operate to establish these in Ireland ? to rivet them there to the danger of the souls of the poor ignorant Irish peasants ? And for what ? that he may rid himself of the mortification of seeing the superiority of a church to which, possibly, he only objects its Episcopal government, the use of the cross in Baptism, and the ring in Marriage ; with a few (as he thinks) objectionable words in its services. This seems even more strange than that the cold-hearted Socinian should consent to assist in imposing upon Ireland a religion, which not only violates reason, but prostrates the understanding at the shrine of superstition, and is a religion, too, which, in maintaining the independent authority of tradition, asks for faith, without shewing its credentials. But if the English Dissenters are willing to impose this yoke on the Irish, in order to obtain what will be a very questionable advantage even to the Socinian, and will remove from the orthodox Dissenter the only secular support which sound religion

now receives, still the Irish Dissenters, and, above all, the Irish Presbyterians of the Scottish Establishment, are by no means willing to make this sacrifice. They repudiate all association for such purpose with Roman Catholics, and they are quite aware of the value of the support and countenance of the Established Church, to which they frequently conform ; and therefore, in estimating the religious wants of the Established Church, it is not reasonable to estimate them at the numbers which remain, after subtracting the Roman Catholics and Presbyterians.

But all denominations of Protestants should be taken together, because all such receive benefit from the clergy of the Irish Church, and all such desire it should be maintained. I propose therefore now, to consider the claims which these persons have conjointly on the good faith of the government, arising from the circumstances under which their ancestors were placed in Ireland,—the engagements, implied or expressed, which were entered into, and the services which we have rendered to British connexion ; and in so doing I hope to avoid saying one word which will be offensive to a Roman Catholic, or to urge any thing inconsistent with the most kind and conciliating policy towards that portion of Her Majesty's subjects in everything which does not

involve danger to the religious Establishment, and the religious opinions of the great majority of the empire.

In speaking of religious opinions, the old and the plainest terms—such as superstition, and especially idolatry—may sound harsh ; but it is impossible to express the sentiments of Protestants, consistent with their formal declarations, to which the writer of this, with many others, has often subscribed, without appearing to want charity. I beg leave to say, however, if I give offence, it is not from an unkind feeling ; and even the apprehension of doing so is a matter of regret.

I write from recollection ; but so far as my memory serves, the rebellion of O'Neal, earl of Tyrone, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, was the first insurrection in Ireland which seemed to originate in religious differences. The result was the confiscation of O'Neal's property, with that of others concerned in the rebellion ; and the six escheated counties were subsequently colonised with Protestants, by James I. ; to defray the expence of which, it is well known, the order of Baronets was created, who, to this day, have the arms of Ulster added to their armorial bearings.

Now there can be no question that these colonists settled in Ireland with a perfect understanding that the Protestant religion was to be maintained there ; to increase the influence of

which was the prime object of the plantation of Ulster.

Again, after the bloody rebellion of Sir Phelim O'Neal, in 1641, Cromwell encouraged the Protestant settlers in various parts; and certainly they had no reason to fear that his policy would not maintain the Protestant religion, which, together with their possessions, was secured in the amplest manner by the Act of Settlement, 14 and 15. C. II., which seems almost expressly drawn for the purpose of connecting the establishment of the Protestant religion and the security of property; this Act being, as it were, the charter from which the title of both is derived, as it pledged the legislature and the states to maintain inviolable the grants made to individuals of the forfeited estates; and, in consequence, the estates of the English or Protestants, which before the Rebellion were only equal to those of the Irish, became after this settlement more than double those of the Roman Catholics; the Protestants, according to Sir William Petty, possessing 5,140,000 acres, and the Irish only 2,280,000. And the same acts stipulated that two acres out of every hundred forfeited should be set apart for glebes for the Protestant clergy, and provided for certain augmentations to some of the poorer bishoprics, clearly evincing that the object of

these acts was not only the security of the newly granted property, but the endowment of the Protestant religion for the use of the settlers; and this policy seemed to influence all the subsequent governments, except that of James II., up to a very recent period;—the two principles on which the Acts of Settlement were grounded, being ever considered as inseparably united; and in fact it seems difficult to separate them; for how can the rebellions of the two O'Neals be condemned, and the consequent forfeitures be justified and maintained, if the object they had in view (that is, as to the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion,) was not only reasonable, but a matter which they might claim as a right; and if you are to redress the wrong in which the rebellion originated, how can you refuse remission of the penalty arising from the offence which your injustice provoked?

I do not now argue whether it was reasonable or prudent to admit the Roman Catholics into Parliament; for that concession has been made, and must not be withdrawn; but when that matter was debated, it was asserted by many that it would not pacify, but merely lead to a demand for a partial establishment of the Roman Catholic Church; a supposition which was esteemed by the friends of the measure, when under debate, as extrava-

gant, and not deserving of any consideration. That demand has, however, been made and supported by such authority as very nearly to enforce its concession ; we have, therefore, the evidence of experience for believing that the movement will not stop when the present object is achieved. It may not be easy to foresee what will be the next step, as the greater the progress the more formidable the difficulties which will present themselves. But as in modern times these rebellions have not only been looked upon with less abhorrence than when the cruelties by which they were characterised were more recent, and as something like a justification is even sometimes attempted, on the ground that the parties were aboriginal inhabitants, in whom the sovereignty was formerly invested, it may be well to examine this part of the subject.

In the first place, the mere Irish, as they were then called, were, for the most part, those who had originally taken possession by force, and had maintained themselves by violence, till they were dispossessed by the English, who possibly had a greater shew of right, on occasion of their first intrusion, than most of their predecessors. But, moreover, though a certain degree of sovereignty had vested in some of their chiefs, especially the O'Neals, it was confessedly a

subordinate sovereignty, and it had been bartered for rank and authority, under the English monarch, to whom the most powerful had long acknowledged allegiance.

We are more inclined to contemplate the case of the Irish rebels with compassion, when we consider that they were contending for their religion, and under obligations which they considered sacred; but this religion itself had supplanted a more primitive form of Christianity; and if the Irish Roman Catholics acted under a sincere though mistaken sense of religious obligation, it cannot be questioned that the views of persons of their persuasion, at that time, were inconsistent with the maintenance of either civil or religious freedom.

Ireland was not an independent power, nor was her connexion with England then merely federal. The right of England was either grounded on the surrender of the rights of one of the monarchs of Ireland to the British Crown, or it was that of conquest. Ireland was essentially a dependance of the British monarchy; a dependance, indeed, which quickly grew of such importance, that she accomplished a federal connexion; which was at last such a state of independance as to oblige the British government to desire a complete incorporation. But it requires no great sagacity to

discover that Ireland, if it becomes for the most part a Roman Catholic country, will be on no very amiable terms with Great Britain as a Protestant country. This hostility may begin to shew itself by perpetual agitation, having for its object a repeal of the Union; or it may take some other direction.

But the hostility of Roman Catholics to interference, and the zeal of Protestants to give religious information, will ever be a source of discord; while the zeal of a portion of the people for their religion, while uninformed, will for ever be stimulated by a recollection of the large domains which their ancestors forfeited; and of which they will then have reason to think they were unjustly deprived. And these sources of discord will be increased rather than lessened, if, as there is reason to fear, an ascendancy is gained by the Protestant Dissenters in England, on whose temporary alliance with the Roman Catholics no dependance can be placed. There can be no doubt, therefore, that it was essential to England that Ireland should adopt the religion of the sister country; for if the Roman Catholic religion had been established in Ireland, it is obvious that it would have been perpetually an instrument in the hands of the Pope, and of the Roman Catholic powers of Europe; most of

whom were hostile to our first Protestant monarchs ; as it is clear that queen Elizabeth would not have established the Roman Catholic religion in her dominions while she was under excommunication, and her Roman Catholic subjects were bound to disobey and resist her. It is equally obvious that even her firmness, and the vigour with which she and her ministers exercised the executive authority, would not have been sufficient to induce her English subjects to tolerate such a proceeding, especially as the lives of her Irish Protestant subjects would have been the sacrifice. The government of those days were, therefore, under an uncontrollable necessity of establishing the Protestant religion. The consequence was, that under the instigation of the Pope, and some Roman Catholic princes, the Roman Catholics hazarded their fortunes in two rebellions, in both of which they failed. The condition of the the Protestants was improved by having their numbers increased, and the property transferred from Roman Catholic to Protestant proprietors ; and a large provision was made for their Church out of the forfeitures. Now it is asked that these advantages should be abandoned ; that the Crown, the Church, and the freedom of England having been materially secured by the danger to which Protestants in Ireland were exposed,

the debt of gratitude should be cancelled ; that the inducements held out to the settlers who were placed in Ireland to secure the new order of things, should be withdrawn ; that the Roman Catholics should now obtain that for which their ancestors had rebelled in vain ; and this to the prejudice of those who maintained the existing Constitution.

But it may be said, it is too far to go back two hundred years for such arguments. Look then to the course of history ever since. It is contested whether the Revolution was occasioned by the attempt of James II. to establish the Roman Catholic religion, or whether his object was solely arbitrary power ; but absolute power was chiefly valuable to him, as a means of establishing Popery, to which he was attached with such sincerity as to shew he had some religion ; and I believe it was the exercise of arbitrary acts in favour of Popery which alone proved sufficient to rouse the nation. But I am content, on the present occasion, to adopt the views of those who support the Roman Catholics, and to allow that the revolution was brought about to avoid an arbitrary government. Is there not then some debt of gratitude due to the Protestants of Ireland, who contributed so materially, and at such risk, to defeat such a design ?

I allow that after the defeat of James II. there was a re-action, which shewed itself in too much severity towards the Roman Catholics. Protestant ascendancy was for a century afterwards the characteristic of the law of the land, and the unquestioned principle on which all parties there professed to act; and no doubt it was often carried to an unreasonable extreme, and exercised with too much rigour. But it must be remembered, that the Roman Catholic rebellion of 1798 very quickly followed the first relaxation of the penal code; and then the Protestants of Ireland were the supporters of the Throne and Constitution of this country; as they were, with the exception of a few Dissenters near Belfast, and some soi-disant Protestants in other great towns, invariably loyal while the Roman Catholics placed themselves in an unnatural alliance with Jacobinism and infidelity, which had so lately abolished the Roman Catholic religion in France, and for a time had even suspended the acknowledgment of a belief in a Supreme Being; a sufficient proof how much they would wish to overturn Protestantism.*

* The writer remembers the whole garrison of one of the great towns marching out to meet the rebels, leaving the loyal inhabitants in the greatest apprehension for two days, when 2000 yeomanry marched in with Orange symbols and Orange flags; to which no objection was made at that time, notwithstanding that

The question, how far Church property may be disposed of by the State, has been too well argued to make it proper that it should be considered here. There can be little doubt, however, that if it should ever come to be *decided*, that it is at the disposal of the Legislature, it will occasion a general scramble in both countries, and be a source of perpetual discord. Whatever may be the abstract right, there will be no quiet, if the disposal of Ecclesiastical property is to be in proportion ; nor can it be beneficial to the mainte-

they paraded daily to the tunes of " The Protestant Boys" and " Croppies-Lie-Down," and even the " Boyne Water." About the same time, on a Thanksgiving Day, several thousand assembled at the Cathedral of the same place, so that the church could not hold them. Nobody can have more objection than the writer of this paper to the use of party distinctions, which are offensive to others ; but at the same time some allowance must be made for the Irish Protestant peasants, who cannot understand how to use the same Orange sash, and to march to the same Orange tunes, is penal at present, which was loyal in 1798. His principles are unchanged, though the exigency of the late Government was different. Plain principles and duties are within his comprehension ; but it is too much to expect him either to understand a change of policy, or to sacrifice to what he does not understand, that which he was long taught to consider as a duty. It seems as if it would be better to disregard these manifestations till the people begin to be tired of them ; or, like the carrying about Guy Fawkes in England, they forget in what the custom originated. Few English boys who burn Guy Fawkes know who he was, and not one Roman Catholic is offended by witnessing those processions.

nance of revealed religion, unless one profession of Faith is supported as the Established Church, and all Ecclesiastical property appropriated to its use. If the doctrine of proportion is once allowed, why should not the Socinian, the Jew, and even the Deist, have his share? If the principle is good in Ireland, why is it to be excluded in England? If the Roman Catholic is admitted to the advantages it gives, why should the Independent be excluded? What then is to shut out the Quaker? After which the Socinian will put in his claim; and we shall have high mass supported in Galway; and the revenues of St. Clement's, Strand, or St. Catherine's, may support the Socinian minister in Essex Street.

These may appear extravagant consequences; but speaking soberly, and I hope deliberately, if the principle is ever granted, I do not see how they can be avoided. It may be said, Indeed, your claims are extravagant; but if it is answered, They cannot be resisted on your principles, will it do in these times to attempt to stop the application of a principle merely at the will of the Government?

It is quite a mistake, to suppose that America affords an instance of the successful application of the principle which it is now endeavoured to introduce into these countries; and, moreover, the

circumstances of the two countries are so essentially different, as to make it very difficult to come to any satisfactory conclusion in reasoning from one to the other. For instance, it may be almost impossible to establish an endowment in a country where none previously existed; for the cupidity of modern times will not supply that which was provided by the piety of ancient days; and this is so much the case, that many of our cotemporaries cannot distinguish in their own minds, between the emoluments arising from endowment, and those from taxation; and as there is no Church property in America, in those States where the Legislature has made a provision for religion, it is effected by a sort of personal tax, which each person pays to the minister of that religion which he prefers. But such a provision, if it was not abundantly objectionable, so far as the interests of religion alone are concerned, would be wholly inapplicable to a country like Ireland, where existing Church property is to be divided. The tithe in fact has always been a deduction from the property of the landlord, which the law has now made exclusively liable; but the landlords in the south of Ireland are generally Protestants, while their tenantry are for the most part Roman Catholics; the question will therefore arise, whether

the tithe is to be paid to the minister who is preferred by the landlord who pays the tithe, or to those who officiate to his tenantry, who are the majority of the population.

If we are guided by the precedent of America, the Protestant clergyman has the best claim. But by the appropriation clause of the first Irish Church Bill, the claims of the tithe-owner were completely excluded; and with that daring which leads a man boldly to the most preposterous enterprises, its authors did not stop to solve a question of great importance, and which it is very difficult to determine, How far the Legislature are at liberty to deal with endowments appropriated to particular purposes. It is not sufficient, in this case, to shew that Parliament have before legislated with regard to them; for a precedent for the violation of the original intention of the grantors is no justification, as it only shews that one, perhaps slight, violation of a right is made a ground for justifying a more flagrant wrong. Neither is it safe to rest these proceedings upon the ground of expediency. It is expedient that the man in want should possess himself of the abundance which he supposes his neighbour misapplies; but the more equal distribution of property in this way would become very inconvenient to society

at large. The degree of expediency may be so great, and so urgent, as to amount to necessity; this, however, has been called the tyrant's plea, and should be resorted to with the greatest reluctance; but in assenting to this principle, we must grant the right of Parliament to deal with the most ancient endowments as they shall think proper. And if we allow this principle with respect to the most ancient, we must also admit it with respect to the more modern institution, unless we assert that prescription weakens rather than strengthens a right.

We must also admit that the Church Establishment is not intended for the benefit of the people at large, whether they will receive its ministrations or not—in which case we give it a Sectarian instead of a Catholic character. We must further suppose it is not desirable that the whole population should become Protestant; for the late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is reported to have deliberately announced his opinion, at the passing of the Irish Tithe bill, that it should be reduced to his notion of the wants of the Irish Protestant population, in violation of the principle that the Church, from the time that it consisted of only twelve poor fishermen, has been an instrument for evangelizing the world; and that, whether men are engaged by pleasure, by a desire of profit or

of honour, by error, or in a state of heathenism, it is the business of the Church to bring them out of that state. The deeper they are involved in error, the less will be the wants of the population from the Church, according to Lord Fortescue's notion; but the more stringent is the duty of the Church to reclaim them; and the more the Church requires to be strengthened, according to that principle which constitutes the command, "Go ye to all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

But further, in considering this measure, it is also an important question, whether in many places the people do not adhere to the Roman Catholic religion much less tenaciously than formerly. This is a matter which it is very difficult to determine; it is so impracticable to acquire an accurate knowledge of the opinions of so large a body of people who are spread over so wide a surface; and this perplexity is not much diminished by the report formerly made by the Commissioners appointed for that purpose; not only because their accuracy is disputed, but because they could not inquire or ascertain the various degrees in which large numbers are said to have fallen off from the church of Rome, without absolutely renouncing her communion. But the embarrassment which the Priests themselves ad-

mit that they begin to experience in collecting their dues, at least shews a decline in their influence; and the alarm they discover on account of the dissemination of the Bible, evinced by the pains they take to prevent its circulation, and the objections they raise to the whole of the Scriptures being read in schools, must create a suspicion that they find the dispersion of the Bible, and the instruction given in the Scriptural schools, has had more effect than they are willing to allow; and this idea is much confirmed by a report, that there are many Roman Catholics in different places who read their Bibles, and attend the schools, even in defiance of the commands of their priests. If we conjecture right in this respect, an awful responsibility is incurred by giving a check to what the Roman Catholic priests contemplate with so much alarm; for no real Protestant can regret that there should be any approach towards a diminution of the number of Roman Catholics; and is it possible for any, even nominal Protestants, not to desire that the anomaly, occasioned by the existence of such a body of Dissenters, should be diminished? And would not this effect be seriously retarded, if not wholly obstructed, in case the authority of the Roman Catholic hierarchy is in any degree established? while such a measure would not afford any relief

to the peasant; for the priests would use their acknowledged authority to exact as much, if not more, for their services than they did before. If some Roman Catholics, and there are many in all countries, are abandoning Popery, without substituting any other religion, that number would be fearfully increased, if you lessen the number of Protestant clergy now zealously labouring among them. But there are some merely statistical disadvantages, which make it melancholy to contemplate the effect of a serious diminution of the Protestant clergy. In many places the clergyman has been the only resident gentleman, the only friend and adviser, perhaps the only physician of the poor. His residence among them has been a check to licentiousness, and an encouragement to civilization; and what he has received from the people, has at least been spent among them, and often returned with interest arising from his own fortune.

It has been said that the Roman Catholic religion has had an injurious effect on civil prosperity, which is observable in Roman Catholic countries; and it is scarcely disputed that those countries, where that religion has been preserved in its integrity, have not been either the most enterprising, or the most prosperous, and the Roman Catholic population of Ireland is not the

most industrious part of its inhabitants. But I will not examine the question how we can connect the imputed cause and the effect. We should, however, be slow to perpetuate that which may be so prejudicial to the temporal interests of our fellow subjects, when, in addition, we know that our ancestors at least thought the religious tenets of Roman Catholics put to serious hazard the everlasting welfare of the souls of those who professed them.

Those who not only admit but contend for the right of Parliament to deal with Church property as they may think proper, may endeavour to create a fund, with which, if they do not consider the Roman Catholic religion idolatrous and dangerous to the souls of men, they may make a provision for the Romish hierarchy. But I confess it not only appears to me, that Parliament has no right to exercise a discretion with respect to Church property, but that the raising of such a question will disturb the security of all property.

It is not disputed, that originally Church property was in the nature of a foundation. Individuals alienated a certain portion of private property for Ecclesiastical purposes. In some instances it was a purely voluntary act: sometimes it arose from the dictates of conscience, and

sometimes from custom, and so transferred from one country to another; but never was imposed by public authority in the manner of a tax; and the only part which arises from public grant consists of the additions which may have been made by the Crown from the forfeited estates, to which it has been shewn that the Protestants have a claim on other grounds. If therefore you assert and maintain the right, that Parliament may alienate the revenues of the Protestant church, and may remove the security of all endowments, an individual may bequeath an estate, with directions that the proceeds are to be employed in teaching the Protestant religion according to the doctrines of the Church of England, or of the Independents, as in a recent case; but there will be no security, that in a few years a Convent may not be set up in the neighbourhood; and the people having been induced to change their religion, it will be determined that the Roman Catholic religion should be taught in the school which was endowed for a very different purpose; or a school may be endowed where the Roman Catholic religion already predominates, and it may be determined that the endowment should be applied more liberally than had been intended.

I grant that the supposed strong ground of the

Roman Catholic case is, that their church was originally despoiled of these endowments. But it is a part of the case which would not be conceded by Latimer, Ridley, or any other of the early Reformers. The true and almost the only defence of the Reformation is, that the Romish religion was not the true Catholic faith.

The right of the Protestant Church to the property of the Church, rests upon the same ground which justified the Fathers of that Church in separating from the Romish communion at a time when schism was still considered a grievous sin. It rests upon the same ground which justified Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and the whole army of martyrs in the Marian persecution, in giving their bodies to be burned.

If the Church of Ireland has no claim to the Ecclesiastical property, John Huss and Jerome of Prague were schismatic criminals, not martyrs; Luther and Melancthon were heretics; and the Inquisition, however severe, was a tribunal which did not originate in injustice.

It will not be necessary now to consider how far the first Irish Church bill, or the views of the late Lord Lieutenant, are an invasion of the rights of private property. The question has been ably argued in that point of view, both as regards the rights of the Church, and the rights of individuals.

But there is still another objection to such a measure, as it violates an obligation more sacred than the rights of property, and is at variance with higher interests than those merely connected with our estates; it is inconsistent with the obligations upon governments to provide for the religious instruction of the people, in the manner which they believe will be most conducive to their everlasting welfare.

While the government and the chief part of the Legislature are professedly Protestant, a division of the Church property, in favour of Roman Catholics, would go beyond the latitudinarian principle of Paley, that the religion of the majority should be the religion of the State. At the time Paley wrote, it was impossible to foresee the evil which might result from the promulgation of this doctrine, or the extent to which it may be carried: it may be extended to the case of a province, then to a county, at last to a parish; till at length it resolves itself into the voluntary principle. Paley, indeed, may have only intended that the majority, if free, will establish that religion, and that alone, which they believe to be true; but in this case we are governed by the decision of the nation at large; and even Scotland in that sense is not an exception; for when the Presbyterian religion was established, she had an

independant legislature, through whom alone her decision could be ascertained ; but a legislature, the majority of whom have sworn the Roman Catholic religion to be idolatrous, could not give an establishment to that Church.

A nation may indeed find an erroneous, even an idolatrous, religion established, and she may not be able to correct the evil ; but in that case the nation is passive under circumstances which she cannot control ; in the other, she is active to do what at the same time she declares to be wrong.

The dissolution of ecclesiastical benefices in Ireland,—either for the purpose of providing a fund for the Roman Catholic clergy, or to be appropriated to secular purposes—can only be considered as an approach to the voluntary system ; for it is a renunciation of that important principle, that it is the duty of the State to provide the whole of the people with instruction in that religion which the legislature believes to be true, whether they will avail themselves of it or not. If you decline instructing them in what you believe to be true religion, and do not provide any other, the inference is, that you consider religion a matter of indifference,—a concession which has secured the suffrage of all the enemies of Revelation. But if you admit that instruction in what you believe to be the truth, should not even be

offered to the people, the Roman Catholic is of opinion that you make but a small additional concession when you teach them that religion which they themselves prefer, but which you know and acknowledge to be erroneous. In this way the orthodox Dissenters, who advocate the voluntary principle in England, enter into an unhappy conjunction with the enemies of Revelation, and are led to patronize Popery, against which their ancestors so resolutely contended.

It will be vain to think of making an approach to the voluntary system of Ireland, and to deny it in England. As surely as it was anticipated, at the time Roman Catholic Emancipation was conceded, that the next attack would be on the Church; and as surely as that prognostic has been realised; as certainly as it was foretold that you could not bind many of the Roman Catholic members to abstain from using the privileges you would concede to them to the injury of the Established Church; and as certainly as they have construed the oath which they were required to take, with a view to bind them, in a way which has been reprobated by several of their own body; so certainly will the English Dissenters take advantage of the concession in principle which will be made, either by mutilating the Protestant Church or the partial establishment of

the Roman Catholic religion *in Ireland*. I believe, therefore, that an election must be made between the maintenance of the Church Establishment in both countries, or its abandonment in both.

The Dissenters rely much on the fact that the primitive Church was maintained by voluntary contributions ; forgetting that it is, for the most part, of ancient voluntary contributions they would despoil the Church ; and that its increase was then owing to direct miraculous interposition. The wonders of the day of Pentecost added to the Church three thousand souls. After the death of Annanias and Sapphira, many signs and wonders were wrought among the people, and “believers were added to the Church, multitudes both of men and women.” The Divine Wisdom saw that these miraculous interpositions were necessary, so long as the sovereign power was opposed to Christianity ; but when He was pleased to bring the rulers of the world to a conviction of the truth of revealed religion, the Church was then left to depend on the fulfilment of the duties which devolved on these authorities, in consequence of the conviction which they possessed ; and it may as well be said that the Church should always be in a state of persecution, because the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, as to say, because the

Church had a measure of success under the voluntary principle, that we should now absolve rulers and people from the obvious duty of maintaining and disseminating true religion.

The precedent of the Establishment of the Church of Scotland has been often stated in defence of the measures formerly proposed for Ireland; but the old Presbyterians would indignantly have rejected the indifference to divine truth evinced in the voluntary principle. The only question with them was, which religion adhered most closely to the primitive model and to primitive truth? They would have disdained the pretence that a question of religion should be decided by numbers.

But it must also be remembered that the difference between Episcopalians and Presbyterians is doctrinally much less important, and much more reconcileable, than that between Roman Catholics and Protestants. One part of the nation was not chiefly Episcopal, with a number of that persuasion scattered through the remainder of the country; on the contrary, the middle class were almost unanimous in favour of the change, and many of the higher orders did not differ, in this respect, from the rest of the people. Some of the great families were zealous Presbyterians; and even Lauderdale, who so

long governed Scotland, for a time used his best efforts in their behalf. Of the higher orders who were attached to Episcopacy, few objected to conform to the Presbyterian Church, when they had no opportunity for enjoying Episcopal communion. So that, in relieving the lower orders from a religion they did not approve, the landed proprietors were not required to pay a religion to which they could not conform, and which they believed to be deeply involved in serious error.

The Universities of Scotland, too, were all settled on the continental model, and presented no difficulty in opposition to the change in religion. But above all, Episcopacy, as it exists in England, had never been established in Scotland, and was never attempted, except during the short period when the Presbyterians and other sectaries so successfully struggled against it in the reign of Charles the Second. Bishop Burnet, in speaking of the attempt to establish Episcopacy in Scotland, in the reign of Charles the Second, and of the power which was then lodged in the Bishops, says: "This was plainly the setting Episcopacy on another bottom than it had ever been in Scotland before this time; for the whole body of the Presbyterian Presbyters did formerly maintain such a share in the administration, that the bishops

had never pretended to any more than to be their settled president, with a negative voice upon them."

So that the people, in the first place, only resisted what appeared to them a very recent usurpation; in the course of which, by injudicious conduct, the title of Bishop had become odious to them; and partly by vacillation, and partly by indiscretion, the cause of the popular religion had gained such strength at the time of the Revolution, that policy suggested the establishment of the Presbyterian religion, to which both king William and the Parliament of Scotland could not only readily but conscientiously consent, as it was the religion in which the king was educated, and which the majority of the Parliament preferred.

It is not intended to attribute to the authors of the first Irish Church Bill any unworthy motives whatever. In regard to time and circumstances, they may have been almost unconsciously influenced by the struggle for power which was then going on; but principles which, with great deference, I will call erroneous, and which are widely spread, are at the bottom of these proceedings. The government and legislature has often had occasion to deal with endowments, and to legislate for the Church, consequently a right to to do so is assumed; and what used to be the

exception has become the rule. Those who are indifferent to religion, and who at best consider it merely as a good moral engine, not an incalculable spiritual benefit; who view it as a useful political instrument, not as a divine institution,—such persons may have a preference for one religion over another, as more or less conducive to the purposes for which the institution is valued: but it is a mere preference; the truth or falsehood of the creed is nothing in their estimation, as they are inclined to look on all forms of Christianity as mere superstition; consequently a very little political advantage will be sufficient to induce such persons to give a preference to any one of the rival sects.

It is not intended to attribute principles so extremely lax to the chief promoters of the first Irish Church Bill; and the author is well aware that some of those who supported it, though too fond of daring experiments, are sincere friends to religion, and not adverse to the Church; but just in proportion as men have more or less preference for the religion they profess, on the ground simply of its truth, and its divine origin, in that proportion will they think it a matter of indifference whether it shall be supported or not.

There is a wide difference between the opinions prevalent in ancient and modern times in this

respect. The controversy in which our ancestors were involved, was not between rival sects, as if it were a mere party question between Whig and Tory, or between Gwelf and Ghibbeline; their inquiry was, What was the decision of Holy Scripture in this respect? What was attested by the blood of the martyrs? Had the Roman Catholics violated these principles by superadding unscriptural doctrines, dangerous to the souls of men? These were important questions, for which the Protestant martyrs contended even at the stake; and in consequence, the English Reformation was not effected by the mere will of the reigning monarch, nor was it the result of a parliamentary decision between rival sects.

It must never be lost sight of, that the first Reformers did not design to change religion; it appeared to them there could be but one religion, and that they wished to reform; and the necessity for reform was not denied by the most sincere and rigid Roman Catholic.

Long before the time of Henry VIII. the eyes of many were opened to the erroneous doctrines of the Church of Rome, in consequence of the preaching of Wickliffe, and the circulation of his translation of the Bible. The doctrines of Luther and the other German reformers were spreading in England, as in every part of Europe, and their

progress was much favoured by the scandalous lives of the Romish clergy, both secular and regular, and other abuses which prevailed to such a degree as made Cardinal Pool, and others of the Pope's, most rigid supporters, desire that the Church should be in some measure reformed. Under these circumstances, when Henry found that he could not obtain his divorce at Rome, his attention was directed to some words which had fallen from Cranmer, tending to shew that a shorter method might be taken; when the question of the divorce was proposed to that excellent man by some courtiers, he declined to give any positive opinion himself, but suggested "it would be shorter and safer way at once to clear it well, if the marriage was unlawful in itself, by virtue of any divine precept; for if that were proved, then it was certain that the Pope's dispensation could be of no force to make that lawful which God declared to be unlawful;" and proposed that this should be decided by consultation with the most learned men in Europe. This proposition struck at once at the infallibility of the See of Rome; but it was too acceptable to Henry to be disregarded. He determined to adopt this course, and the matter was accordingly put into Cranmer's hands.

Cromwell, who was introduced into the king's

service by Wolsey, also favoured the reformed doctrines, which enabled the Church, in her Convocation, to make approaches towards a reformation; to effect which, even the power of that arbitrary monarch would have been unequal, if it had not been an object much desired by many of those of whom the Convocation was composed.

Henry was in his heart a Roman Catholic, as he was in his life a sensualist; but the slave of his passions, he was made the unwilling, almost the unconscious, instrument in the hands of Divine Providence. Still the Reformation was but little advanced in Henry's time, and the Six Articles shew how much he was attached to the old superstition.

The suppression of most of the monasteries was designed by Wolsey before the Reformation was thought of; his object was to convert them into cathedrals, collegiate churches, and colleges, which project was carried partly into execution; of which Christ Church Oxford, the Bishoprics of Oxford, Gloucester, and others, are ostensible witnesses. But the King's necessities, and his desire to gratify his favourites, afterwards interfered to prevent the full execution of the Cardinal's intentions. This, however, was overruled by Providence for the protection of the infant Reformation; and another instance was afforded that

God can bring good out of evil ; for many of the great families being thus put in possession of Abbey lands, they acquired an interest in the maintenance of the reformed religion, and without denying the existence of purer motives. The value of this connexion appeared, not only during the progress of the Reformation, but afterwards, when the Protestant Church was threatened in the days of Charles II. and James II.

The danger of a resumption of these grants has apparently now passed away ; but it is hoped that some of those noble houses may have a higher interest in defending the Church of England, than a fear of losing the large estates with which the Reformation had invested their ancestors.*

* It has been asserted, by those who wished to disturb Church property, that tithes were originally set apart for three distinct and specific purposes, viz. the maintenance of the clergy, the support of the poor, and the keeping of the ecclesiastical edifices. It would be difficult to find positive historical authority for this three-fold distribution ; but as far as our information goes, the obligation is strictly performed by the clergy. The tithes were originally vested in the Bishop ; and at that time the clergy were collected about the Cathedral, from whence they were sent by the bishop on missionary expeditions about the diocese ; and no doubt built what are now the chancels at the different stations where they were accustomed to preach and administer the sacrament. In time the Lords of Manors, and others, desired to have resident priests on their estates ; for which purpose the Lord often made a grant of land or glebe ; and the people added churches to the chancels for their own accommodation. This notion is confirmed by the fact that many of the ancient chancels

But to return to the subject before us. As I have said before, Henry found, and did not create, a disposition favourable to the Reformation; on the contrary, he often repressed it. Even the best of the Roman Catholics saw that reform was inevitable; and to his first act, the assumption of the supremacy, which was an absolute renunciation of the authority of the See of Rome, he obtained the consent of both Houses of Convocation in both provinces. Henry says that title first appeared in the Petition of the Convocation of the province of Canterbury to the king, but did not pass without opposition; and in the Convocation of York, Tunstall protested against it; but Gardiner, afterwards so infamous for the part he took in queen Mary's reign, wrote a book entitled "True Obedience," against the Pope, and in favour of the king's supremacy, in which he drew his arguments from the practice of the primitive Church; and to this book Bonner supplied a preface. These men held their situations during

are obviously of a much earlier date than the churches; and in some old churches the clergyman still reads from the chancel.

The Bishop appropriated certain tithes to the priest so located; but there was no obligation to maintain any edifices but those originally constructed by the clergy—the cathedrals and the chanels, which are still kept in repair by ecclesiastical persons, or out of ecclesiastical property. The clergy are now, as they ever were, forward in assisting the poor; and there is no evidence of any stricter obligation having ever existed.

this reign, and concurred in most of Henry's measures; and unless we are prepared to class those prelates among the Reformers, we must absolve the Church from the disgrace of owing the Reformation to Henry VIII.; and we must deny to that monarch the glory of more than, in general, an unconscious and reluctant participation in so good a work; but even in this we see the hand which directs all things according to the counsel of His own will; for the Reformation acquired consistency in consequence of the slow progress which her Reformers were compelled to make, each step being, as it were, the consequence of the deep conviction of her prelates, under circumstances which made them both fearful and reluctant to make a change; and the Church was, therefore, characterised by that moderation which has ever since been one of her peculiar charms. But if the Reformers of Henry VIII.'s time here appear to have contemplated, for a moment, the making any ecclesiastical changes, without the consent of the Convocation, whatever may have been their motives, the great body of the bishops appear to have been implicated, and to have fully seconded it; for when cardinal Pole wrote to queen Mary, urging her to be as resolute in rejecting the supremacy as her father had been in acquiring it, he admitted such a proposition could

not flow from the Spirituality, who had all complied so far, and written and declared for it so much. They must, therefore, have been either unwilling or unconscious instruments; and it is probable they were not aware to what extent this increase of prerogative was capable of being used. But, in truth, there is some reason to believe that the king's supremacy, to a certain extent, was an original prerogative of the kings of England; for there were statutes passed so far back as Edward I. and Richard II., which inflicted the penalties of a *præmunire* for obtaining bulls from Rome for translations of Church patronage, which interfered with the king's prerogative.

The next most important step in the Reformation of the Church, was the translation of the Bible into English. In 1536, a motion was made in Convocation, that there should be a translation of the Bible, to be set up in all Churches; and it was finally resolved "to petition the king to give orders to some to set about it."*

The first Articles of religion, in this reign, which made the Scriptures and the ancient Creeds the only standards of religion, and, as Burnet says, "truly stated the foundation of Christian faith," were

* Burnet's History of the Reformation.

agreed upon in Convocation after much consultation and long debating.

It is not a little singular that the famous Six Articles, which made the reformation of religion appear to retrograde, were passed by the authority of Parliament, and I believe were not brought before the Convocation. The Mass-book was not much altered in this reign; so that it may fairly be said that many of the changes in religion originated in the Convocation, and that all were confirmed by its authority, though not without much opposition; but I cannot avoid remarking, in this place, that the Providence of God appears to have been peculiarly manifested in these transactions. If Henry VIII. had obtained his divorce at Rome, he would have remained the zealous defender of the Roman Catholic faith, as he was always, in many respects, its secret friend. In that case the Roman Catholic corruptions, and the progress of the reformed opinions, might have forced the new religion on some future and weaker monarch; but then the Reformation would not have assumed the form of the Church of England.

Again, as the cause why the king favoured the Reformers was well known, and there was much reason to doubt his sincerity, the Popish prelates did not fear to concur in his designs; as they had reason to hope his real inclinations would prevent

a full and final abandonment of his former opinions. In this way the Reformation obtained a sanction ; thereby giving it a permanency which it wanted in other countries.

Again, though Henry restrained, he could not altogether prevent, the progress of the Reformation ; otherwise he would have lost an important support in carrying forward his more selfish projects ; and his Protestant wives gave such support as they could to the religion with which their own cause was identified. We find Henry, therefore, to be an important agent, appointed by Almighty God ; but the unwilling, or at least the unconscious, instrument in bringing about so good a work.

The next great era in the history of the Reformation, is the reign of Edward VI. In the year 1552, the Liturgy was revised, and an Act of Parliament passed, directing it to be read ; as also an Act allowing, and even recommending, the clergy to marry. Articles of religion, to the number of forty-two, had previously been settled (it was supposed by Cranmer and Ridley) ; and a Convocation, which sat this year (1552), agreed to, and confirmed, all these regulations which the Parliament had enacted.”* Burnet also says : “ The Convo-

* Andrews’s Continuation of Henry.

cation at this time agreed to the Articles of religion which were prepared the last year.”

In the reign of queen Elizabeth, there can be no doubt that the first steps towards the re-establishing of the Reformation were taken by Parliament; but they chiefly related to matters which were previously determined by the ecclesiastical authorities. The most important in its consequences was the Act declaring and confirming the queen's supremacy, which, though it occasioned the resignation of all the bishops, only put in force the doctrine formerly propounded by the Convocation, and enacted by Parliament in the reign of Henry VIII.; and as this was repealed by the Parliament, without the intervention of the Convocation, in the reign of queen Mary, Elizabeth's Parliament, by repealing the Act of Revocation, put in force the original determination of the Convocation, in the reign of Henry VIII.; and it appears as if the bishops, in queen Elizabeth's reign, resigned their Sees, rather with a view to embarrass the Reformation, than from any real scruple of conscience arising from the Act of Supremacy; as queen Mary herself had used that title, when she called her two first Parliaments, and her two first Convocations.

The Church of England claims, and with some reason, to be the true Church of Christ; and in

separating from Rome, she avoided, rather than incurred, the guilt of schism. That the changes effected at the Reformation were brought about by the State cannot be denied ; as they originated in the disgust which the people began to feel at the vices of the Romish clergy, and the abuses of the Church of Rome. But I have looked into the three great periods at which the work of Reformation was effected, and I find that the concurrence of the Church was required and always obtained ; there was no question then whether the Church of England, or rather that portion of the Catholic Church existing in England, had, or had not, reformed herself ; but whether a portion of the Church, or a single nation, had a right to take the work of Reformation into their own hands, in opposing the Act of Uniformity.

It was urged by Feckenham, Abbot of Westminster, in 1559, from his place in Parliament, that “the consent of the whole Church, in all ages, with the perpetual succession of Saint Peter’s chair, ought to weigh more with them than a few new preachers.” The answer was, that by the Epistles of St. Paul, every Church has power in itself to order the forms of their worship, and the administration of the sacraments among them.”*

* Burnet’s History of the Reformation.

Evidently the latter part of the Thirty-fourth Article of the Church of England is intended to meet this objection, where it is said, "Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, or abolish, ceremonies or rights of the Church ordained by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying." Some of the bishops, who resigned in the reign of queen Elizabeth, (Bonner, for instance, and even the respectable Tunstall,) had acknowledged the supremacy of Henry, Edward, and Mary; and still they retired, rather than recognise, that part of the prerogative of queen Elizabeth, though they did not question her title to the crown; for they sat in her first Parliament. Thus they objected to a form of Church government, approved by the Ecclesiastical Council, by a decision founded on the arguments of some of their own body; some of whom were among the recusants; and they may therefore be more properly considered guilty of schism, than the queen's government be accused of overruling the ecclesiastical by means of the civil authority. But the doctrine of the Church is chiefly expressed by her Articles, which, it appears, entirely originated with the ecclesiastical authorities; and those determined on in the time of queen Elizabeth are still the standard to which the members of the Church of England are under an

obligation to conform. Fuller tells us they were confirmed by the Convocation, in 1562, according to the title prefixed to them; but were not confirmed by the Parliament till 1571, nine years afterwards; so that the legislature, instead of being too forward, was rather backward in this important matter; but ultimately everything appears to be in order. The Articles of religion, which were a little altered from those in king Edward's time, were set forth "for avoiding diversities of opinions, and for the establishing of consent, touching true religion," by the representatives of that part of the Church of Christ which existed in the realm of England; and the Parliament did no more than give effect to their decisions, by requiring conformity to them; and in so doing, cannot be said to have gone beyond their proper province.

If the Methodist Conference, which represents that body, as the Convocation then did the Church existing in England, were to set forth what they conceive to be the real doctrines of the late Rev. John Wesley, by whose opinions the whole body profess to govern themselves, they could not be said to violate any public right, or do any private wrong, if they were to obtain a bill to prevent any persons who did not conform to these doctrines from officiating in their chapels.

If that part of the Church which existed in England, had a right to reform herself, she exercised that right in the most legitimate manner; and the legitimacy of her power can only be disputed by those who, like Feckenham, would require that any corruptions should be continued till the consent of all Christendom to a reform should be expressed; or till the approbation of St. Peter's chair (from whence many of the corruptions proceeded, and in whose usurpations they in part originated,) could be obtained. And when can the Roman Catholic Church shew such authority as Feckenham required? Never; for the Greek Church, and many of the Asiatic Churches, have never been consenting parties since the Roman Pontiff usurped the title of Universal Bishop, or since the four first General Councils.

The Convocation of the Church of England had as much right to set forth the true doctrines of religion, as the small number, who assumed to be representatives of the Latin Church at Trent, had to give authority to many of the corruptions of their Church, which had previously been matter of practice, rather than asserted either in the way of doctrine or of discipline.*

* We are too ready to allow that the Bishop of Rome was formerly the head of the Christian world. He was no doubt the spiritual head of the Western Empire; but it was the decay of

I have made this hasty review of some of the principal circumstances which occurred, in bringing about the English Reformation ; as it appeared to me highly interesting, at the present moment, to examine how far the Parliament of this country had ever dealt arbitrarily with the Church, or improperly interfered with her spiritual jurisdiction ; and it seems perfectly relevant to the present subject, as the Churches of England and Ireland are now united by the only obligations which can be conceived to bind a legislative body, and which the Protestant Peers of Ireland may claim to be indissoluble ; as they relinquished their hereditary right to seats in the Legislature, to secure the Protestant Church of Ireland, and to preserve inviolable the union between the two countries. But it remains to be seen, whether the Reformation in Ireland was brought about chiefly by ecclesiastical authority.

Perhaps the history of that country affords no instance of any great change being accomplished in Ireland with perfect regularity. The character of the people, and the circumstances in which she was placed ; the division among her

the Eastern Empire which seemed to confine the Christian world within the limits which acknowledged the authority of the Roman Pontiff. If the Eastern Empire had continued in its glory, the Patriarch of Constantinople would have successfully resisted the pretensions of the Roman See.

inhabitants, partly colonists at different periods, and partly aboriginists ; her viceregal government ; very imperfect state of civilization, and the want of subordination in all classes, would always prevent perfect order and regularity, and especially on interesting occasions. Nor did these circumstances first occur on the introduction of the Protestant religion, as the civil feud existed previously between the colonists and the aboriginal inhabitants. So there was also a feud, both before and after the Conquest, between the religion of the ancient Irish, and the religion of the See of Rome. Archbishop Usher has clearly proved that the religion of the ancient Irish differed materially from that of Rome ; but, as Dr. Johnson said, anything may be denied ; so, in this instance, the conclusion to which Archbishop Usher's argument seemed to lead, has been questioned by Mr. Moore in his History of Ireland.

The difference between the religion of the ancient Irish, and that of the Church of Rome, may have arisen either from some of the early Christians having derived their religion from the Asiatic Churches, of which it will be seen presently there is very sufficient evidence ; or it may have arisen from those who were subsequently instrumental in the conversion of that portion of the inhabitants, who remained heathens, having

commenced their labours before the Western Churches became essentially corrupt.

The difference, with respect to the time of the celebration of Easter, is a proof that the Irish did not derive their Christianity from Rome; and it is admitted that they had little in common with that See, whose authority they by no means esteemed infallible. The Irish Church celebrated Easter on the fourteenth day, whenever it happened on a Sunday; but the fifth General Council regulated the time for keeping Easter according to the rule now observed by all the Western Churches. If, therefore, either the supremacy of Rome had been allowed, or even if the Irish Church had not been perfectly independent, they would have submitted to the solemn adjudication of this point; by what would, in that case, have been superior authority. But they did not take that course; and even when a Synod was held at Strenaeshalch, said to be the same as Whitby in Yorkshire, at which both the kings, Oswin and Alefrid, attended; and king Oswin urged the duty of keeping one order and rule, Colman, a bishop, who was sent from Ireland, said the Easter he had observed he had received from his ancestors, and that it was the same observed by the blessed St. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and of all the churches

founded by him.* In this declaration there is not only a dereliction of the authority of the Western Church, but an appeal, as it were, to an Asiatic origin, which is only to be accounted for by supposing their first Christian instruction was derived from Asia.

But it further appears that in 630, according to Mr. Moore, the attention of the Bishop of Rome, Honorius, was drawn to the controversy concerning Easter, who addressed a letter to the nation of the Scots,† not to consider their own small number wiser than all the ancient and modern Church of Christ. This exhortation is remarkable for not evincing any of the modern pretensions of the See of Rome; there is no assertion of the infallibility even of a General Council; no requisition to obey the See of Rome as dutiful children; but, simply, an exhortation to distrust their own infallibility. Moreover, we find this letter failed of its effect, and this matter is referred by a deputation to the heads of cities, not to the head of the Church, as the case is stated by Mr. Moore; and though the deputation were sent as children to their mother, they report not an Apostolic determination of the question, but their

* Bede.

† The common name of the Irish.

own observation, that various nations kept Easter at the same time as the Church of St. Peter. But this mission, after all, was not to the Bishop of Rome, who had already expressed his opinion; but is sent in search of evidence upon which the Irish Church themselves were to decide.

Whether the ancient Irish were wrong or right, is here out of the question; but this controversy, so long continued, shews that Mr. Moore is under a mistake, when he urges the appeal made to the heads of cities, as if it were a submission to Papal authority; and adds, that the Roman practice on this point was ascertained and adopted; for he himself admits, in a subsequent page, that it was only adopted in the southern part of the kingdom.

But this controversy, with respect to the keeping of Easter and the mission to Rome, is much too instructive to be dismissed in the summary way in which it was disposed of by Mr. Moore. It was one upon which the Irish were peculiarly tenacious. St. Columba, called Columbanus, left it in charge to his successors to observe the time of celebrating Easter on Sunday, from the 14th to the 20th of the moon, after the custom of his predecessors, and contrary to the practice of the Church of Rome.*

* Bede, Lib. iii. Cap. iv. Sir James Ware.

Subsequently to the controversy between Colman and Wilfred, at Whitby, Cumian, Abbot of Hy, perceiving so great a schism in the Irish Church,* in an epistle to Segenius, declares his intention of carefully examining the question; and which he proposes to do, not by an inquiry into what the Bishop of Rome had determined, for of that he was made aware by the letter from Pope Honorius, but by “taking the advice of the Apostle, to prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good.” Then he says he “entered at the Sanctuary of God, i. e., I turned over the Holy Scriptures, I studied History, and lastly, all the Cycles I could find.” He then says he consulted different bishops as to their separation from the Apostolic See. Those bishops so assembled, he says, sent “some, of whose wisdom and humility was had good experience, as it were children to their mothers;” and “some of them arriving at Rome,” “there they abode at an Inn, with Grecian, Hebrew, Scythian, and Egyptian,” where they all celebrated Easter in the Church of St. Peter; and the result was, the Irish bishops adopted the Roman Cycle, first in the south, and not for some time afterwards in the north, not without vehement opposition, and the rebuke of the monks of

* Sir James Ware, Vol. II., p. 37.

Hy, who reproved Curwen sharply as a deserter from the tradition of his ancestors.*

Mr. Moore states the circumstance and the fact of this mission to Rome somewhat differently ; as he says, the deputation was sent to the heads of cities, but adds, as if Rome alone was concerned, that they sent to Rome as children to their mother ; whereas Cumian's account is, that the deputation was sent as children to their mothers, and that some only arrived at Rome, evidently implying that their inquiries were directed to more than one of the heads of cities.

It further appears, that other heads of cities were then considered of co-equal authority with Rome ; for though the controversy was settled in Ireland, it appears, from some Greek writers of the life of St. Chrysostom, that the Welch sent a deputation to Constantinople, in the time of Methodius, to consult him as to the controversy concerning Easter.

We should be at a loss to account for the extreme pertinacity with which the Irish adhered to a custom which now appears so immaterial, and which Mr. Moore attributes to their usual fondness for ancient usages, if it were not for the expression used by Colman, after the conferences at

* Sir James Ware.

Whitby, that their usage in this respect was the same observed "by the blessed St. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved."

Making use of the same arguments as Poly-crates, who, Eusebius tells us, presided over the churches of Asia in the second century, and who, in a letter to Victor, Bishop of Rome, says, "We therefore observe the true and genuine day; * * * for in Asia the great lights are dead which shall be raised again on the day of the Lord's advent. * * * Philip, one of the twelve Apostles; and, moreover, John, who leaned on the Lord's breast; moreover, Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, and martyr; * * * these all kept the day of Easter on the fourteenth day."

Mr. Moore, however, truly observes that the Irish time of keeping Easter was not exactly consistent with the Asiatic tradition, as the Irish always kept the festival on a Sunday, and only on the fourteenth day, when it happened to be Sunday,—a variance which did not escape the penetration of Colman's antagonist, Wilfred. But it appears, from the history of Socrates Scholasticus, that there were various opinions with respect to the time of keeping Easter. He says, "Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who afterwards suffered martyrdom under Guadianus, communicated with Anicetus, Bishop of Rome, and made

no separation from him on account of this festival, although Polycarp himself kept Easter on the fourteenth day. Some therefore, in Asia the Less, kept the fourteenth day ; others, in the Eastern parts, celebrated that feast on the Sunday.”*

Irenæus, second Bishop of Lyons, says, in a letter to Victor, Bishop of Rome, “The mystery of our Lord’s resurrection ought to be celebrated of a Sunday ;” but he adds (after observing that when Polycarp came to Rome, there had been some small controversy between him and Anicetus, with respect to the previous fast), “Neither could Anicetus persuade Polycarp not to observe it, because he had always kept with John, the disciple of our Lord, and the other Apostles, with whom he had been conversant ; nor did Polycarp induce Anicetus to observe it.” These things being thus, they received the communion together, and Anicetus permitted Polycarp to consecrate the elements in his own church.”†

* History of Socrates Scholasticus, Lib. v. p. 345.

† Eusebius, Lib. v. pp. 87, 88.—From this controversy we may form a judgment how far the modern pretensions of the See of Rome were asserted or submitted to at that day. Victor, Bishop of Rome, did threaten an excommunication against the Churches of Asia ; but Polycrates, and the other bishops, said, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” And Irenæus places Polycarp and Anicetus on a level ; and speaking to Anicetus, says, “Those Presbyters who presided over the Church which you now govern ;” allowing him no greater extent of government than over

If, when Irenæus says the festival ought to be kept on a Sunday, he meant to express his preference to the Western practice, he probably would have said so ; as we find, from Socrates, that some of the Western churches kept Easter on a Sunday ; and knowing they differed from Rome, we may suppose that their practice, and that which Irenæus recommends, was that followed by the Irish ; for the Church of Lyons was a daughter of the Church of Smyrna, at which we need not be surprised, as Lyons and Vienne were then the two most considerable commercial cities in France ; and communication with Smyrna was probably much more easy than with Rome over the Alps.

Adhelm, Bishop of Sherburn, at the end of the same century, informs us that the British and Irish derived their Pascal Cycle from Severus Sulpitius, a monk of Gaul ; and Sulpitius, as well as Germanus, who is said to have instructed St. Patrick, were reputed to have been disciples of Martin of Tours.* An ancient Irish author, published by Spelman, affirms that St. John the Evangelist chanted the Gallican course ; and it is

the See of Rome. Besides Irenæus, in his book on Heresies, says, “ If there were any doubt concerning the least article, ought we not to have recourse to the most ancient churches where the Apostles lived, putting Smyrna and Ephesus on the same footing as Rome.”

* Palmer on Antiquity of English Liturgy.

not a little singular, as well as confirmatory of the idea that the Church of Ephesus was of coequal authority with that of Rome, that we have Polycarp and Irenæus, according to Eusebius—Polycrates, according to Socrates—and Colman (an Irish bishop in the seventh century),—holding the same arguments as to the source and authority from whence they had the time of keeping Easter.

It appears from the letter of Cumen, who wrote some time about the middle of the seventh century, that the Roman Cycle began to be observed in Ireland in his time. We observe, also, the controversy between Colman and Wilfred took place about the year 635; we may fix, therefore, the middle of the seventh century as the time at which the Irish mode of keeping Easter was first brought into question.

If, then, Mr. Moore is correct in representing St. Patrick's mission to have taken place so late as 432, and if he was really appointed by the Roman See, how did it occur that he was not acquainted with the decree of the General Council, held at Nice in 325, which determined the period at which Easter should be kept near a century before? and if this Patrick was, as Mr. Moore represents him, the Apostle of Ireland, how did it happen that the Irish abandoned the Roman Cycle, which,

if he came from Rome, he must have introduced ? and why did they adopt the Cycle of Sulpitius, which was derived from the Church of Lyons ? The fact is, that either the Irish had received previous Christian instruction ; and Mr. Moore's Patrick, whom he would represent as distinct, is the same as Palladius, often called Patrick by the the Romans ; or Patrick did not proceed from Rome, and was not aware of the customs of the Roman See, and had received both his commission and his Christian instruction from the Gallican Church, which then followed Asiatic customs, and acknowledged the See of Ephesus as its head, and St. John for its founder.

History has recorded so little with respect to Ireland during the time of which we speak, and the period is so remote, that the circumstances are involved in a degree of mystery very favourable to the frauds and falsehoods of later tradition. Obviously, several persons had the name of Patrick, and the name may have been taken from reverence for the founder of Christianity in Ireland, without a fraudulent intention.

Prosper says, "Palladius, the Bishop, was first sent, *who is otherwise* called Patrick, who suffered martyrdom among the Scots."* Terechen

* Sir W. Betham's Irish Antiquarian Researches, Part II. p. 296.

says, the LATER miracles of Patrick were accomplished after the second year of Lothaire's reign; and as Lothaire became king A.D. 428, his second year was 430, the very year Palladius was sent, by Celestine, to the Scots.* He adds, Pope Celestine's Legate, or Nuncio, was also called Patrick. The evidence which establishes the identity of the Roman Patrick and Palladius, whose mission failed, is so strong, that the only way in which it has been attempted to avert the consequences has been by placing the mission of another Patrick, whom they assert to have been also commissioned by Rome, immediately after the mission of Palladius, to whom they attribute so many of the circumstances which probably belong to the first Patrick, the true Apostle of the Irish, as to make it very difficult to disentangle the genuine history.† In this way the first Patrick is made to acknowledge pretensions of which perhaps he never even heard; but the ancient Irish themselves were aware of the attempt; for Ardius (says Segenius) "wished him to change his instruction, i. e. (according to Sir W. Be-

* Sir W. Betham's Irish Antiquarian Researches, Part II. P. 286.

† In the year 438, a Committee was appointed to purify the Irish annals. This was the sixth year of the Roman Patrick; but Aydyus tells us, that in his time the tradition of the country supported the true history.

tham) to make it more consistent with the new-fangled stories promulgated a short time before, for the purpose of persuading the Scots that Palladius, or the Roman missionary of 430, was the same person as their venerated Patrick.”*

The Romanists, however, seem hardly to have been aware of the difficulties with which they had to contend in making the mission of the true Patrick to have been after that of Palladius. As it was necessary, not merely to confound the acts of Palladius and Patrick, which has been done by these early writers, either ignorantly or by design; but also to deny the existence of Christianity previous to the time of Palladius, as it would derogate from the honour of the Roman Apostle to suppose he had been sent to Christians, not to the heathen; and the question would naturally arise, what were the opinions of these early Christians, and from whence was their Christianity derived? Accordingly, Mr. Moore represents Palladius as rejected by the Pagans, not by the Christians; but in contradistinction, the Venerable Bede says Palladius was sent to the Scots believing in Christ.

Mr. Moore intimates his belief that Pelagius, as well as his disciple Celestine, were Irishmen;

* Ancient Religion, Part II. p. 317.

and he admits, on the authority of St. Jerome, that their heresy was common to others of his countrymen;* and the sayings set forth by the Romish Church, as those of St. Patrick, shew that their Patrick was not sent to convert the heathen, but to bring a Christian people into subjection to the See of Rome. "For an age, God be thanked, you (the missionary clergy) have been calling upon the Churches of the Scots to enter paradise in union with the Romish Church, so that, as Christians, they might unite with you in the same service as the Romans."† We know, therefore, that Christianity had made considerable progress in Ireland before the time of Palladius, consequently before the time of the Roman Patrick, who is placed, by Mr. Moore, after Palladius, who could not, therefore, have been driven from Ireland by heathens on account of his Christianity, as they had already Christians living along with them; and it is highly probable that thus early Christianity was introduced into Ireland by one who bore the name of Patrick, which designation was subsequently usurped by others, on account of the authority which it carried with it; and this is borne out by

* Moore's History, p. 208.

† Sir William Betham, Part II. p. 283. It appears also, from the book of Armagh, that Colman, the Bishop, offered his Church of Cloncin to Patrick.

St. Patrick's Epistle to Sertorius, which was evidently sent by Roman soldiers, and the last Roman legion left Britain in 404, near thirty years before the mission of the Roman Patrick. We may also conjecture that many circumstances which pertained to the true Apostle of the Irish, were handed down by tradition, and appended, at a subsequent period, to the histories, partly true and partly fabulous, which narrated the lives of his successors; consequently, it is not unlikely that the true Patrick came from Gaul, was in connexion with the Church of Lyons, and did derive from thence the customs of the Irish with respect to Easter, and also some other particulars of their ritual in which they differed from Rome.

It is not improbable that the ancient Irish Church was infected with the Pelagian heresy. Pelagius was a Briton; his opinions prevailed in Spain, with which country the Irish had pretty frequent intercourse; he is said also to have taken refuge in Ireland. We are informed, by Sir William Betham, that "in the heads of the books in the version of the New Testament in the book of Armagh, written by Ardens, is found the name of Pelagius fixed as the author of the expositions and explanations." We are bound in charity, therefore, to admit that the mission of the monk

Augustine to Britain, and the mission of Palladius to Ireland, may have been suggested by a desire to rescue the inhabitants of these islands from an heretical opinion, and not by ambition.

The See of Rome had not then placed itself in the temple of God, "shewing himself that he is God;" and though the mystery of iniquity had begun to work a centre of influence, placed where civilization and information most prevailed, and where the Scriptures were most abundant, may have had a beneficial effect in repressing erroneous opinions so likely to prevail in distant quarters, at a time when intercourse was so tedious and difficult; the Almighty may, therefore, have permitted the Roman authority to prevail till she apostatized; since which her influence has gradually declined, as previously it almost imperceptibly increased.

While the Roman See only claimed consideration, as one of those supposed to be founded by the Apostles, and only exercised her superiority in the way of admonition and advice—which was the case at the time we speak—no evil could arise from attention to such authority, especially when Rome could claim to be the Mother Church. But that was not always the case, as we see in Ireland, from the assertion of one of the Irish bishops, that their Christianity was derived from Ephesus; and

we also learn that there was a Greek Church in Ireland, a portion of which remained even in the time of Usher.

Mr. Moore endeavours to evade the obvious inference, that this portion of the Irish Church must have been independent of Rome; * * * because he says, at that time the heads of the Greek Church were on the best terms with the See of Rome. But he forgets that the occasion of difference had not then arisen; for the See of Rome had not then taken the title of Universal Bishop, which was so offensive to the pretensions of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

This Greek Church may have been either a remnant of the Church of St. John, or the descendants of some colonists from the Church of Constantinople; if it does not prove independance, it is because Rome did not then claim the dependance of foreign and distant churches; though that See, before her apostacy, felt and practised the duty of encouraging missions for the conversion of the heathen, or for confirming those recently converted.

Mr. Moore further endeavours to establish an identity between the religion of the ancient Irish and the modern Roman Catholics, because they celebrated the Eucharist, which they called the Mass, and the "Sacrifice of Salvation." The word Mass was anciently used for prayer; and

the Communion in the first Prayer-book of our Edward VI. (whom the Roman Catholics will not claim as a good son of the Church) is still called the Mass. The word sacrifice is said* to have been used in the same sense as we do sacrament; and the minister was said to give, as the people were said to receive, the sacrifice, meaning that which was set apart for holy uses. Adamnon, an early Irish Christian, is said, by Mr. Moore, to have used the expression "making the body of Christ." Now this Adamnon, though no doubt a pious Christian, lived in the seventh and eighth centuries; and after a visit to Britain, in the time of Alfred, abandoned the custom of his predecessors as to keeping Easter; and having adopted a better rule in that respect, he may have there also acquired an erroneous notion as to transubstantiation; and therefore affords no proof, in that respect, of the faith of the ancient Irish.

Mr. Moore is constrained to acknowledge that John Scotius Eregina at least declared "that the Sacrament of the Eucharist is not the true body and the true blood of Christ;" and to avoid the obvious inference from such a declaration from so ancient and distinguished an authority, unquestionably Irish, he has no other resource but boldly to assert "that the Catholic doctrine, on this point,

* Translation of Sir James Ware.

has always been that the body of Christ is under the symbols, not corporeally or carnally, but in a spiritual manner." If this exposition of the doctrine of the Church of Rome had been propounded earlier, and by better authority, how much controversy might have been saved; but Mr. Moore goes further, and admits "that the general opinion is, that he (John Eregina) denied the real presence;" and he informs us that the natural bent of Eregina's mind makes it highly probable that the impression so generally received is correct; but he does not inform us how it occurred that the individual who advanced an opinion so contrary to that now maintained by the Church of Rome, was held in high estimation. Eregina was consulted on the doctrines of grace and predestination by Hincmarus, Archbishop of Rheims, and Pordulus, Bishop of Laon, and by Charles the Bald, upon the controversy of the Eucharist.*

The fact is, the doctrine of transubstantiation, as well as that of image worship, which was controverted about the same time, were now, for the first time, asserted by authority; though they had been growing up in the Church for a considerable time, and were not established without considerable difficulty and much controversy; and pro-

* Sir James Ware, Vcl. II. p. 60.

bably would never have been maintained, if it had not been for the additional importance which they gave to the Romish priesthood.

The only two authorities quoted by Mr. Moore, in support of his assertion that the doctrine of the real presence was held by the Irish, are Adamnon, mentioned before, and Sedulius, who both lived at the time these controversies were most active. The language attributed to Sedulius might have been, and no doubt was, used in a spiritual sense; for to bring him forward on the Romish side, was one of the boldest stratagems ever practised; as Archbishop Usher quotes him as supporting the very opposite doctrine, and with what success any person may determine. In expounding the words of our Saviour, "Do this in remembrance of me," he useth this similitude: "He left a memorial of himself with us, even as if one who was going a far journey should leave some token with one whom he loved;" and he quotes Claudius, "because bread doth confirm the body, and wine doth make blood in the flesh, therefore one is mystically referred to the body of Christ, and the other to the blood."

Mr. Moore would next persuade us that the Irish maintained the Romish doctrine of purgatory. He does this upon the authority of an early Irish Synod—to which, however, we cannot

submit, as he does not give us the date,—and an old Irish missal also without date; and a tract attributed to Cummon, but which may have been written by a much later author. He also quotes the author of a Life of St. Bridget, who, he says, wrote in the seventh century according to Ware; but I cannot find that Sir James Ware gives any date to the authors of these Lives of St. Bridget, except Animosus, of whom he expressly says, he is not certain that he places him in the proper century, as there were many of that name; and one Anmcaid, Bishop of Kildare, (not an unlikely person to write the life of St. Bridget,) died in 981. But in contravention of evidence so slight and unsatisfactory, Usher quotes the Books of Tribus Habitationibus, attributed to St. Patrick, where it is said there are but three habitations under the power of Almighty God, the kingdom of heaven, hell, and the present world.* Usher also quotes an ancient Synod among the Cotton Manuscripts, which says, “the soul being separated from the body, is presented before the tribunal of Christ; and it is not carried into life, till the Lord hath judged it; or into pain, unless the Lord do damn it.” Upon this point we find Archbishop Usher supported by the opinions of Mr. Moore’s own authorities, Sedulius, and also Adamnonus, who says, “that

* Sir James Ware, Vol. I. p. 25. Idem. p. 29.

after this life either death or life succeedeth," and that "death is the gate by which we enter into one kingdom." Sedulius also says "that it is impious to adore any besides the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."* Mr. Moore sums up a very meagre argument on this subject, by asserting that the only point on which the ancient Irish differed from the Roman Catholics of the present day, was as to the marriage of the clergy, which he admits was permitted. But he has not condescended to notice many particulars on which Archbishop Usher shews most satisfactorily that their principles and practice were diametrically opposite to those of the Roman Catholics of the present day. Upon his own authority, Sedulius, the Pope's messenger, held that miracles would not continue in the Church, "for, that the faith increasing, miracles were to cease, since they are declared to have been given for their sakes who believe not;" and "that every miracle is vain which worketh not some profit to man's salvation."

Next Claudius asserts that St. Peter had a Primacy given him over the circumcision ; and

* Mr. Moore considers Adamnon and Sedulius as good evidence respecting the religion of the ancient Irish ; for he relies chiefly on their authority, in attributing the doctrine of the real presence to the Irish ; he must therefore admit that the doctrine of purgatory was not held by the Irish.

adds, that St. Paul was chosen to have a Primacy, on founding the Gentile Churches, and that St. Paul was not inferior to St. Peter.* And Mr. Moore himself is obliged to admit that there is evidence in favour of the Communion being received in both kinds, though he is pleased to consider it inconclusive. In short, whatever may have been the points of difference between the Irish and the Church of Rome, (and Usher shews that in many respects they are the same which divide Romanists and Protestants at the present moment,) Baronius, a Romish authority, shews that the Irish were not in communion with Rome, and did not consider themselves bound by the decisions of the Western Church; for he asserts, “that all the bishops of Ireland stood up in defence of the three Chapters; and when they perceived that the Church of Rome received the condemnation of the three Chapters, they departed from him, and adhered to the schismatics that were in Italy, Africa, and other countries, animated by the vain confidence that they stood for the Catholic faith, while they defended those things that were concluded at the Council of Chalcedon.”†

* Sir James Ware, Vol. I. p. 30.

† Baronius, quoted by Sir James Ware, p. 30.

The ancient British Church seems to have been the same as the Irish, and was probably derived from the same source. The seven British Bishops, who with Donath, Abbot of Bangor, met Augustin, the Monk and Romish missionary, at Augustin's Oak in Worcestershire, refused to adopt the Romish computation of Easter, and the Roman rite in the administration of baptism, and could not therefore have acknowledged the supremacy of the Roman See. On the contrary, in an ancient manuscript in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, there is this passage :

“ After the Saxons had become Christians, by means of Austin, in such sort as Austin had taught them, the Britons would not eat or drink with them, because they corrupted, with superstitions, images, and idolatry, the true religion of Christ ;” * a course exactly similar to that taken by the Irish Bishop, Dagamus. Again the Venerable Bede tells us, “ Even to this day the Britons are in the habit of expressing their contempt both for the faith and the religion of the Anglo Saxons, and to hold no more intercourse with them than with the Pagans.”

It is not a little singular that we find not only

* Our Protestant Forefathers, p. 22, by W. S. Gilly, D.D.,
Prebendary of Durham.

those early Christians in Ireland and in Britain contending for the faith once delivered to the Saints against the usurpations of the See of Rome,* and in opposition to its image worship and superstition; but we learn from St. Jerome, that, in the year 397 there was a small body of Christians dwelling in the Carthusian Alps, who had their own bishops and their own clergy in their mountain retreats, who had no image worship, no saint worship, no relic worship, no masses for the dead, and who allowed their clergy to marry.†

* Milman, in a note, Book II. Chap. 3. of his *History of Christianity*, in reference to the mention whether St. Peter's was ever at Rome, says: "With Lightfoot I believe that Babylon was the scene of St. Peter's labours; but I am also confident that in Rome, as in Corinth, there were two communities, a "Petarine and a Pauline, a Judaising and a Hellenising Church." These two may have gone on for some time, which, as Milman is of opinion, accounts for, and solves the difficulties in the arrangement of the succession to the Episcopal See of Rome; but when the Bishop of Rome began to aspire to be universal Bishop, the notion that St. Peter was the first Bishop of Rome greatly facilitated those pretensions, and probably caused the expulsion of the Paulinists, who retreated to the Alps, and it is not unlikely were the ancestors of the Waldenses. It is not a little singular, that all the ancient Churches, which separated from the Church of Rome previous to her Bishops assuming a supremacy, such as the Ancient British and Irish Christians, the early Spanish Christians, and the Syriac Christians in India, appear to have been often ignorant of any such pretensions, and always to disregard them.

† St. Jerome, *Adv. Vigil*, *Epist.* 53, quoted by Rev. W. S. Gilly, in our *Protestant Forefathers*.

We have also Claude, Bishop of Turin, resisting image worship ; Peter Waldo at Lyons, formerly the See of Irenæus ; and the Albigenses in the south of France ; the Vaudois in Piedmont, supposed to be descended from the Cathari near Cologne. Milman mentions that the Christians of Lyons and Vienne were a religious colony from Asia Minor and Phrygia. May not some of the doctrines for which the Albigenses contended have been derived from Irenæus ; and may not the authority of the See of Rome have failed in seducing them, as it did other Churches at the same period ; because, having derived their ritual and discipline from Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, and from the See founded by St. John, and not from that assumed to be founded by St. Peter, they considered themselves justified in resisting the corruptions to which the Western Church had by that time given its authority ?* but there are

* The Spaniards were converted by Martin, a Greek. The Council of Toledo, so late as 704, decreed that the Pope had no authority in Spain ; and in the Acts of forty Spanish Councils, according to Geddes, no mention is made of the Pope or his authority ; which he confirms by a quotation from Morales, the most learned antiquary of the Spanish nation, who admits that the Gothic kings did alone, and without ever consulting the Pope, command national Councils to be called ; and by these Councils, whatsoever was convenient for the faith, and for other matters in religion, was ordered ; and he accounts for this by saying, “ As the first kings were heroes, and not subject to the Pope, so, when they became Catholic, the Pope feared to restrain their authority.”

circumstances of unquestioned notoriety in the history of the Romish Church itself, which shew that a division continued between the patriarchs of the ancient Irish, and those connected with England, long after the controversy with respect to Easter had ceased, and it may be after they were reconciled to image worship and other growing superstitions.

It is well known that there is a dispute in the Church of Rome as to whether the Primacy of Ireland belongs to the See of Armagh or Dublin, and this was at once settled by Archbishop Usher, after the Reformation, in favour of Armagh, on the ground of antiquity. If Armagh was the first bishopric established in Ireland, independant of the Romish See, and if Dublin was the first established in connexion with Rome, we can easily see why the controversy can never be settled by the Romish Church; for if they determine in favour of Dublin, they admit that St. Patrick, the first Christian missionary and bishop in Ireland, was not connected with Rome; if they determine in favour of Armagh, they acknowledge many bishops who acted in opposition to the authority of the Romish Church. Previous to 1161, when Gelasius, Archbishop of Armagh, for the first time consecrated O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin, the Prelates of Dublin, with those of Waterford and

Limerick, received their consecration from the Archbishop of Canterbury, evidently because the Irish Bishops had no authority from the See of Rome; for St. Bernard,* whose reverence for the See of Rome cannot be questioned, tells us that the Archbishops of Armagh, for fifteen successions, were chosen by election out of one particular family. But Sir James Ware, in his account of the Archbishops of Dublin, mentions one circumstance peculiarly interesting, as tending to shew a decided difference between the religion of the Irish as it originally existed in Armagh and in Dublin! In 1121 the burgesses and clergy of Dublin complained to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in behalf of their elect Bishop Gregory, “that the Bishops of Ireland have great indignation towards us, and that Bishop most of all who dwelleth at Armagh, because we will not submit to their ordinations, but will always be under your government.” But why would they not submit to their ordinations, if they considered them valid? and why did they prefer a government so far off?†

This dependance of the See of Dublin, on that of Canterbury, existed previous to the conquest, but did not originate in any schism among those professing the ancient religion; for Dr. Charles

* See Ware's Ireland.

† Ibid.

O'Connor, himself a Roman Catholic, informs us that the first act of hostility to the independance of the Irish Church, "was committed by the Danes of Dublin, who, from deep-rooted national antipathy to the Irish, refused to acknowledge the jurisdiction of Armagh, and therefore promised obedience to the See of Canterbury; this national quarrel first suggested to the court of Rome the facility of subduing both." Doctor O'Connor afterwards says, "A Legatine commission had been granted to Gilbert of Limerick, who wrote a book in 1090, maintaining that every Missal different from Rome is schismatical; but not one Irish ecclesiastic was found to support him in that controversy. Perceiving, therefore, that nothing could be effected by such odious instruments as the Danes, the Legatine commission was granted to St. Malachy; but, whether he was too much of an Irishman, or whether his gentle manners disqualified him for the turbulent task of altering the discipline of a whole nation, though he was honoured with the pall, he resigned his commission, and returned to Clonville, too happy to die in that peaceful solitude in the arms of his excellent friend St. Barnard."

We cannot be surprised at the course taken, in this instance, by Malachy at the Monastery of Clonville; he probably saw the Church of Rome in its purest, and, in the person of St. Barnard, in

its holiest form. Many corruptions may have grown up in his own Church, which he wished to be reformed, especially that by which a member of the same sept was always recommended by the chiefs to be elected to the same ecclesiastical benefice, by which means the M'Donald's family retained the See of Armagh for 208 years ; Malachy O'Morgan himself being the first who was nominated in violation of this pernicious custom ; and it was probably with a view to abolish this practice, that he was induced to accept the appointment of the Danish Prelates in connexion with the See of Canterbury. His object, therefore, was to seek support from the power of the Roman Pontiff against the native chiefs ; but although the Pope, with his accustomed policy, granted two, and in 1151 four palls, by which the prelates of the ancient religion were flattered into a partial submission ; still he would not trust them ; for in 1128 the Pope decreed that no archbishop should presume to celebrate any Synod within his province without the consent of the Archbishop of Dublin.*

* An attentive consideration of dates will tend to shew that the conquest of Ireland by the English was suggested by ecclesiastical, and not secular, ambition ; or, we should rather say, by the desire of that portion of the Irish Church which had been founded by Rome to usurp authority over that more ancient portion which had an Asiatic origin. In 1121, the Archbishop and

Good men were then well aware of the danger resulting to the Church from absolute kings and lawless chiefs; but they had yet to learn the evils which might result from overbearing licentious ecclesiastics. It is said to be a matter of doubt what first induced Henry II. to undertake the conquest of Ireland. We find, however, that the Pope made previous efforts to establish his authority; and in 1151 we see he was partially successful. In 1155 his famous letter was addressed to Henry, in which he invests him with the lordship of Ireland with a feudal dependance on the See of Rome; but the king of England did not attempt to take possession, till his assistance is solicited by Desmond, king of Leinster, which was then a Danish Colony, where the ecclesiastics were originally in connexion with Canterbury, then a dependant on Rome. Desmond's deposition, by an Irish prince, Ossian king of Munster, must have been unfavourable to the Romish preten-

citizens of Dublin complain of the obstructions they experienced from the Irish bishops, particularly he who dwelleth at Armagh. In 1128, the Pope decrees that no synod should be held without permission from the Archbishop of Dublin, which was an effort to reduce the Irish Bishops' authority. In 1151 he grants four palls, by which he tried the influence of honorary distinctions; and in 1155 he creates Henry II. Lord of Ireland, finding that nothing will be effectual but force. Henry does not think this offer worth his acceptance, till he is induced by Desmond to interfere, with whom, Moore admits, he had no previous communication.

sions; and though the Danes themselves were not fit instruments for the purposes which the Pope had in view, they would serve as auxiliaries; and the expulsion of their prince afforded a pretext for the interference of the English arms, which induced the Roman Pontiff to offer the sovereignty of Ireland, to which he had himself no claim, as a bait to Henry's ambition.

We have further reason for believing that the conquest of Ireland originated in a desire to maintain and extend the authority of the See of Rome, as the cause of Desmond was considered as identified with that of the Church; for on his arrival in England "the clergy received him as the benefactor of their order, and entertained him in the Monastery of the Augustins with great hospitality;* and in a Synod held at Waterford (a Danish colony) in 1175, the severest censures of the Church were denounced against all those who should impeach the donation of the Holy See, or oppose its representative;† but though supported by that portion of the Irish clergy who were in connexion with Canterbury, and possibly, in many instances, favoured by others who were most oppressed by their chiefs; still it was long before the Irish people could be reconciled to a

* Encyclopædia Britannica, Article Ireland.

† Phelan, p. 54.

dependance on the Italian ecclesiastic, even assisted by the arms of the English monarch; for so late as 1484, when Pope Innocent VIII. established the collegiate Church of Galway,* his bull recites that the people of that place were “civilized men, observing the decent rites and customs of the English Church (evidently as distinguished from the Irish); and these customs differed from the wild Highland men of that nation, who harassed them, so that they could not hear the offices or receive the sacraments;” and even in Henry VIII.’s reign, the Irish questioned the authority of Wolsey, the Pope’s legate.†

It not only appears that it was a desire to establish the dominion of the See of Rome, which first introduced the English into Ireland, but it was the antipathy of the Irish to the Roman usurpation, which principally maintained an hostility between the Irish and their conquerors; from whence originated many acts of oppression and injustice on one side, and of violence and outrage on the other, which occasioned the Irish to be designated Irish enemies, and, being treated as such, they had no inducement to acquire civilization from

* The Warden of Galway has a peculiar jurisdiction. The object must have been to take Galway out of the hands of the Irish Bishop.

† Remains of the Rev. W. Phelan, Vol. II. p. 111.

their hard masters; but, on the contrary, they often seduced them to the adoption of their own barbarous and lawless customs.

Before the conquest of Ireland by the English, the clergy were nominated by the chiefs; were dependant on the chiefs; and paid to them the ordinary duties of clansmen; they were also amenable to the Brehon laws.* After the Conquest they were made superior to the chiefs; and all the privileges of the English Church, in connexion with Rome and its vexatious pretensions, were extended to the Church of Ireland within the pale; and, as far as the power of England extended, these provisions took effect; but the other parts of Ireland followed their ancient usages; and the Magnates refused to pay tithes, and levied contributions on the churchmen as on others; consequently, as far as the English power extended, the clergy supported the conquerors and the Romish pretensions, while the chiefs had sufficient reason for still remaining Irish enemies. It was therefore the policy, both of the English colonists and of the Church of Rome, that Englishmen only should be appointed to ecclesiastical benefices; and the enmity of the Irish seems to have been considered so thoroughly irreconcilable, that no attempt is made to conciliate

* Remains of the Rev. W. Phelan, Vol. II. p. 111.

them, and the Pope is so well convinced that the maintenance of his authority depended on the success of the English, that when Bruce invaded Ireland the Pope excommunicated him ; and the Archbishop of Armagh, who was then an Englishman, followed the English army, distributing indulgences to those who should fall in the cause of Pope and King.

At this time it was considered so necessary to the security of the Church, that its benefices should be filled by Englishmen, that the statute of Kilkenny made it highly penal to present a mere Irishman to any ecclesiastical benefice,* or receive him into a monastery or other religious house,—a provision which could only have originated, in the then state of the Church, with the consent of the ecclesiastical authorities ; and this Parliament, which was assembled in the south where the English interest was predominant, was attended by three archbishops and five bishops ; being probably all who were willing to submit to the Papal dominion enforced by the English sword. Further, these southern bishops, by this statute, forbade the use of the Irish dress or language, or the taking of an Irish name, on pain of the forfeiture of lands or tenements ; it was made penal even to entertain an Irish Bard, or to allow an Irish horse to

* Phelan, Vol. II. p. 110.

graze on English pasture. This could not have been the result of deference to superior authority; for, on another occasion, the same ecclesiastics published an edict that all beneficed priests, who presumed to pay their allotted portion of the king's subsidy, should be deprived of their livings, and declared incapable of future preferment; and that for the like offence, the vassals of the Church should be excommunicated, and their descendants, to the third generation, excluded from orders; which is sufficient proof that the Roman Catholic churchmen considered the tyrannical provisions of the statute of Kilkenny at least as much for the interests of the Church as of the Government, which the English had introduced; for, if they thought otherwise, it is obvious they did not want either the courage or the power to have resisted it; but, on the contrary, they fortified the civil disabilities and punishments of this violent enactment with spiritual terrors, by publishing a formal anathema against all transgressors of the Statute of Kilkenny, and of the eight prelates who were parties to this transaction, seven were of Papal appointment.*

The consequences of these violent proceedings (which the late Lord Clare characterised as a declaration of war against the Irish) were, as

* Phelan, Vol. II. p. 115.

might be expected, rebellion on one side and penal enactments on the other. The jurisdiction of the government, which, at the time of the passing of the Statute of Kilkenny, extended to Cork and Galway, was gradually narrowed to Carlow, and at last it became a proverb, that they who lived west of the Barrow lived west of the English law.

We have thus seen that the Papal authority introduced the English dominion into Ireland, while the English power, and the forms of English law, were used to rivet the chains of Rome upon the Irish people. It is not said that the ancient Irish religion was pure, and it is not denied that the habits of the people were lawless and barbarous before the conquest by England; but the Romish Church superadded its own peculiar superstitions, and the corruptions inseparable from its unscriptural pretensions. The English did not attempt to repress turbulence, they only banished it to places more remote, and they made no effort to reclaim the offenders.

The first remission of this state of hostility occurred at the time of the Reformation, and affords another proof, that the attempt to introduce Popery was the great barrier between the contending parties.

When Henry VIII. renounced the spiritual authority of the See of Rome, he also disclaimed

the feudal superiority of the Pope, and declared himself king of Ireland. This renunciation of the title of Lord of Ireland, which seemed to express a feudal dependance on the Papal See, was so gratifying to the Irish, that all the nobles, both English and Irish, arrayed themselves on the side of the Crown, and at the same time declared the king supreme head of the Church.

Desmond, on the 16th of January 1540, executed a written indenture, in which he utterly denied, and promised to forsake, the usurped primacy of the Bishop of Rome, and engaged to resist and suppress the same. O'Connor and O'Dunne gave similar pledges. O'Donel, in addition, promised to expel all who adhered to the Pope. M'Mahon, O'Neil, O'Brien, De Burgh, and all the inferior chieftains followed the example.* It cannot be said, according to the gloss put on this transaction by Roman Catholic writers, that it proceeded from the satisfaction experienced by the Irish, because the king was declared Defender of the Faith; for the Irish chiefs especially engage to defend and maintain the supremacy, by which the king renounced his dependance on Rome; and not only so, but that they will jointly or separately annihilate the

* Phelan, on the authority of Leland, Cox, and O'Connor.

usurped primacy and authority of the Bishop of Rome. The Irish act of supremacy makes any person, who even maintains any part of the authority heretofore claimed by the See of Rome, to incur the penalties of a premunire.* No wonder that this Act should be agreeable to Irish chiefs, who had acknowledged the king of England as their sovereign. His pretensions were in strict conformity to the original usages of the country, as no oaths were taken to Popes before the English conquest; no bulls were received from them; and the prelates were always appointed by the chieftains.

The good disposition shewn by the Irish Mag-nates was cultivated by the English government. The principal chiefs were raised to high rank in the peerage. O'Neil waited on the king, and was made Earl of Tyrone. Desmond consented to appear within a walled town, to attend Parliament, and to pay taxes "as liberally as Ormond himself." Tyrconnel resisted the attempt of Francis I. of France, to draw him into treasonable practices, and this harmony continued for eight years after Paul III. issued his "terrible threatening bull" against Henry VIII., which not only dethroned him, but cut him off from Christian

* 28 Henry VIII. c. 13.

burial, and doomed him to eternal curse and damnation.*

A bright and happy prospect seemed at this time to open on the Irish nation ; but, unfortunately, the bonds of clanship, which had hitherto connected the chiefs and their followers, began to be relaxed ; the chiefs were alienated by the encouragement given to a change so injurious to their power ; the people not half civilized, and partially relieved from their former complete dependance on their chiefs, had no resource except in the protection of their priests, and a power was created, the influence of which is only beginning to be relaxed.

However brief the happy opportunity, we may fairly say the Reformation afforded the first occasion to the Irish to submit to the government, and gave the Crown an occasion for displaying a cordial and generous disposition to conciliate their allegiance. We have seen that in the reign of Henry VII. the wild Highlandmen of Ireland, were not well affected to the Anglo-Roman religion ; and even in Henry VIII.'s time, they had no great reverence to a Roman legate. Their attachment was therefore to the local priest alone ; and England, for near four centuries, had

* Phelan, on the authority of Father Peter Walsh,

been endeavouring to establish their influence. She had supported the Papal usurpation, which at length she riveted, by keeping her Irish enemies, as she was pleased to call them, in barbarism ; and having sown to the wind, she was destined to reap the whirlwind. The Irish were an ignorant, and, like all mountaineers, were naturally a superstitious people ; the great majority spoke only the Irish language. The priests performed the service in Latin, while the English Reformers addressed them in English, which was more disliked, and was equally unknown. Their former prepossessions, and their superstitious fears, however, were in favour of the priest,* while the Reformers addressed themselves solely to their reason and conscience, in a language they did not understand, deluding themselves with the idea that they could establish the exclusive use of the English language by the penal provisions of an Act of Parliament.

The opposition to Popery was expiring, but had revived, till the chiefs were offended, and would not have been extinguished, if the people had been properly instructed. A feeble but abortive attempt was made, in queen Elizabeth's reign, to give the Irish the liturgy in the Irish language ;

* The Priests often adopted their Pagan superstitions, with a little alteration.

but this failed, because the order for that purpose was neglected, and was probably neglected on account of the difficulty of procuring a regular clergy, who would use that language. But whatever was the cause, the lamentable effect has been to leave a large portion of the people in the profession of a religion different from that of the State, and of the principal proprietors of the soil. But in other respects the course taken at first for the reformation of religion, was not more different from that which was pursued in England, than the circumstances of the two countries made unavoidable; and it must be kept particularly in view, though there were national Synods in Ireland previous to the introduction of Popery—except the Synod of Cashel, in Henry II.'s reign—no Convocation seems to have been held there subsequent to that event; but as a substitute it appears by 3rd and 18th of Edward IV., two Proctors were returned to Parliament by every Diocese, who sat as members till the 28th of Henry VIII., and were then only allowed to be advisers. On the other hand, Ireland had the advantage of England in one respect, that several of her prelates conformed, consequently they did not even leave a pretence for questioning the unbroken connexion of the Apostolic succession of her clergy. Brown, Archbishop of Dublin, in the

time of Henry VIII., embraced the Reformation, and no doubt sincerely, for we find that, while only a Provincial of the Augustine order, he advised the people to make application to Christ alone;* but “that Bishop who dwelleth at Armagh,” was now in favour of Rome—the Parliament then had the power both of a Parliament and Convocation, and Brown got the act of supremacy passed with some difficulty; but as the Primate Cromer, at the head of the Romish party, underhand opposed it, it was in a great measure inoperative for ecclesiastical purposes.

The proceedings, for forwarding the Reformation in king Edward’s time, seem to have been more regular. He sent over an order in 1550 for reading the liturgy and prayers of the Church in the mother tongue; “but before the proclamation for observing this order issued, the Lord-deputy convened an assemblage of the archbishops, bishops, and clergy, and signified to them the king’s order, and the opinions of the bishops and clergy of England who adhered to the same.”† Primate Dowdal opposed this order; but not prevailing, he departed from the assembly with several of his suffragan bishops. Archbishop Brown, and those who remained, consented joy-

* Ware.

† Ibid.

fully ; as did also the Bishops of Meath, Kildare, Leighlin, and Limerick. Brown, as might be expected, was deprived by queen Mary, but was succeeded by Curwin, who also conformed to the Reformation at the coming in of queen Elizabeth, who was at first excommunicated by Paul IV. But the queen, “wondering ” (as Father Paul expressed it) at the man’s hasty disposition, thought it not profitable either for herself or for her kingdom to treat any more with him.” His successor, more subtle, offered, if she would send some bishops to the Council of Trent, that the reformed liturgy should be sanctioned, the cup allowed to the laity, and the priesthood permitted to marry :*—concessions which shewed how easily theological differences could be disposed of, if the Papal authority was maintained.

For eleven years Elizabeth’s Roman Catholic subjects submitted to the measures which she took to shake off the Papal yoke, and to perfect the Reformation ; the laity frequented the churches, multitudes of the priests adopted the prescribed changes, and the majority of the prelates retained their Sees.† This would seem to give a sanction to the Reformation, which no subsequent resistance can effectually impugn ; for

* Phelan’s Remains, Vol. II. p. 165.

† Phelan, on the authority of Cox and Ware.

if the recent changes were heretical, a temporary conformity was a criminal hypocrisy which discredited the parties. If they were not heretical at the time, well informed modern Roman Catholics will hardly esteem them so, merely on account of the subsequent denunciation of the Pope. They were denounced, however, the juncture being favourable for such an exercise of Papal authority.

The Anglo-Irish nobles, within the pale, had become discontented, because their monopoly of favour had been infringed by the reconciliation between the Crown and the lords of Irish blood; and in a memorial to Edward VI. they complain of its being intended to call a Parliament, and "that the matters therein propounded were not made known to us."* In addition, they were no doubt cordially attached to the Roman Catholic religion, with which their fortunes had always been identified. The chiefs of Irish blood, on the contrary, had no attachment to the court or to the religion of Rome. We have seen that in the reign of Henry VIII. they were ready not only to admit the king's supremacy, but to resist any pretension whatever to authority or supremacy on the part of the Bishop of Rome, and

* Phelan, p. 170.

even when they had entered into rebellion, in concert with the Roman Catholics, they shewed no reverence to that Church.

A Roman Catholic writer says, "When Desmond took possession of Youghal, even the churches, and whatsoever was sacred, were polluted and defiled by the soldiers;" and the same author informs us that "the soldiers of Hugh O'Neil robbed and spoiled the monasteries of Kinna-beogue and Kilcrea, and profaned other churches :"* and so great was the disgust experienced by their Spanish allies, that Lord Mountjoy informs us that a Spanish officer avowed his conviction "that Christ did not die for the Irish."†

The Irish chiefs were willing, and even desirous, that the crown should have a supremacy in ecclesiastical matters, of which they had in a manner possessed themselves, in their own petty and subordinate jurisdictions; and accordingly they repeated, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the oath which they had taken in the reign of Henry VIII., which secured the supremacy of the Crown. But they would not endure that their own sovereignties should be abridged. They

* Theatre of Catholic and Protestant religion, quoted by Phelan.

† Phelan, p. 249.

could not abandon their old usages, and submit to equal laws, as between them and their vassals, which it was queen Elizabeth's intention to establish; for which purpose she sent instructions to her Irish government, from time to time, to break down the power of the nobles: a policy which was continued by James I., and with more effect after the failure of Tyrone's rebellion.

"The Irish," (says Sir John Davis) "were received into his Majesty's protection; and our visitation of the shires, however distasteful to the Irish Lords, was sweet and most welcome to the common people." But by these proceedings the whole of the Irish aristocracy were rendered discontented.

Sir George Crewe, in his letter to Secretary Cecil, says: "The English" (that is the Irish English) "desire to recover again the supreme government, in bearing her Majesty's sword, by one of themselves;"—"but the Irish rebels are at a higher mark:" . . . "to recover their former greatness, they kick at the government, and enter into rebellion. These several ambitious swellings in the hearts of the English and Irish rebels, are the grounds of the continual rebellions, and they mask their ambition with religion, making the same their

stalking horse to allure the vulgar to crown their fortunes.”*

We can have little doubt this is a true state of the case. The Pope availed himself of these discontents, and the Irish chiefs, who were probably indifferent as to what religion prevailed, embraced the cause of the Romish Church, to obtain the aid of the Spaniards, and the countenance, not to say the influence, which the court of Rome could then confer by its spiritual exhortations, and the charm of its consecrated plumes.

The Irish peasantry were in a state of great barbarism and gross ignorance ; they are described as having been long without spiritual instruction, and the contest between the ancient religion, and that of Rome, seemed to refer, in some points, to matters with which they had little concern, and to others more essential, which they could not then understand. They had ceased to hear of St. John or the Church of Ephesus ; but they probably heard often of Rome and St. Peter. Religion, under human influence, has a tendency to decay, when discussion has ceased to remind men of the points on which they differed, and when a reference to the only standard of truth is difficult, if not impracticable. It is probable, therefore, that the superstitious feelings of

* Quoted by Phelan, p. 175—6.

the Irish peasants (which stood in the place of religion) were easily transferred to the Romish religion; when, therefore, their chiefs concurred with their priests in resigning them to the Papal dominion; and when, with their warm feelings, they had once engaged and suffered in the cause of that Church, it is no wonder that it is now so difficult to emancipate them: they do not know the ills to which it first introduced them, and they will not believe it is the principal cause of those which they still endure.

If it had been possible for queen Elizabeth to have conciliated the allegiance of the Irish chieftains, and to have gradually abridged their obnoxious privileges, Ireland might not now present all those anomalies which are so embarrassing to British statesmen of all parties. The failure of these attempts at reformation may be another instance, among the many which history presents, of the danger of introducing even beneficial changes among a people not capable of appreciating or using them, and of applying the institutions of one country to another under quite different circumstances.

The English government desired to emancipate the Irish peasant from the iron rule of his chief, and to extend to him the blessings of equal privileges under English laws; but the effect was to transfer

his allegiance to the priests who led him to rebellion.

John O'Neil's rebellion followed. The parties were the priests, the native Irish, and Anglo-Irish aristocracy ; the latter deprecating the subversion of the English government, with which their own fortunes were united, but wishing just so much calamity as would throw the government back into their own hands.

The Irish chief is said to have had besotted habits, but as possessing address, subtlety, enterprise, and perseverance, to a degree scarcely ever found in one of that character. He had baffled the English governor, and "he had overreached the law officers of the Crown.* However, in burning the cathedral of Armagh, his zeal overstepped his discretion : he was excommunicated by the titular Primate, and the rebellion was subdued. Pope Gregory XIII. thought it prudent to explain the bull of his predecessor, Pius, which freed the people from their allegiance, and required "that they be not so bold as to obey the heretical queen,"—"and whosoever did otherwise was bound with the sentence of anathema." The explanation declared that this should be understood, as that the same should always bind the queen of

* Phelan, p. 178.

heretics ; but that it should by no means bind the Catholics, as matters then stood or were ; only thereafter it should bind them, when the public execution of that bull should be had or made ;” that is to say, it was declared to be unlawful to obey an heretical excommunicated queen ; but it was only to be unlawful when that interpretation should be convenient, and the execution become practicable. The explanation seems to be in the same spirit with that which at present interprets the oath now taken by Roman Catholic Members of both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Butler, a Roman Catholic writer, thought the explanatory bull scarcely less objectionable than the edict which it professes to mitigate.*

Such was the course of events in the reign of queen Elizabeth. The Reformation was adopted by the Irish prelates, while the laity conformed to the ritual prescribed by the Church ; but the sword of the discontented nobles was resorted to, to give effect to the spiritual thunders of the Vatican. It failed of its immediate effect ; but it served to alienate the Irish people from the Reformed Church, and from the government of England, and to continue civil discord for two centuries at least.

* Phelan, p. 182.

The See of Armagh was vacant from 1558, till Adam Loftus was appointed in 1562; and in all probability but very little was then done towards the reformation of the Church; as we find that in 1607 Usher had digested the ancient canons of the Church, but had not published them. A Convocation was held subsequently, wherein the Articles of the Church were composed and published. As the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England were afterwards adopted by an Irish Convocation, and have generally been considered as the standard of doctrine in both Churches, these Irish Articles are only mentioned to shew, that whatever was done, in the way of setting forth the doctrine, was executed by the authority of the clergy duly assembled in Convocation.

The work of Reformation in Ireland seems to have been imperfectly accomplished, owing to the rude state of her population, their ignorance, and the divisions and civil dissensions among the nobles; but chiefly because the people were not addressed, as the English were, in the vulgar tongue. But, however faults of omission may have been committed by the government and the higher clergy, there seems to have been no violation of property, and no unauthorised meddling with the doctrines of the Church. A number of the bishops voluntarily conformed; the rest absented themselves, when opposition appeared to

be unavailing. So careful were those in authority not to violate any positive rights, that Archbishop Dowdal, who dissented at the meeting of the clergy, was only deprived of his title of Primate (which his own Church disputed), not of his bishopric till he went into voluntary banishment.*

The case of the Irish Church is simply this : the Romish religion was not the religion of the ancient Irish, but was established, in the first instance, by the authority of the English arms. The clergy were reconciled to the change by a desire to be delivered from the despotism of their chiefs, and were allured by the power and precedence awarded to the clergy, and especially to the superior ecclesiastics. The gift of the Palls favoured these pretensions, while the people were too barbarous and ignorant to judge for themselves ; and being removed from all other Christian instruction, could only give up themselves to be governed by their chiefs ; and, when their authority was subverted, to be influenced by the priests.

The Roman Catholic religion, therefore, originated in conquest, and was maintained by ambition. The Protestant religion on the contrary, we have reason to believe, was embraced by Archbishop Brown, and probably by Curwin and the other

* Ware.

bishops, from conviction. The Roman Catholics, therefore, have no claim from prescription.

The Irish, indeed, have claims on England ; for they have a right to demand that she should emancipate them from those errors in which the English involved them. Neither has the Church of Rome any claim to the Church property in Ireland ; for it appears the Irish did not derive Christianity from thence. We cannot find that tithes made a part of the property of the ancient Irish Church ; for the suffragan bishops, as well as the rectors, as also the Herenach, were supported, along with their families, by an allotment of of lands, called Termon lands.* And an Act of Parliament, passed in the reign of Henry VIII., to enforce the payment of tithes, gives ground for supposing that, previous to the Reformation, tithes were not paid beyond the precincts of the pale. But as much the greater portion of the lands, in the other parts of Ireland, were forfeited, and the subsequent grants were made subject to tithes, the title of the clergy to their tenth portion can only be impeached by a claim from the original proprietors, which equally invalidates the titles of by far the largest proportion of estates in Ireland.

The conquest of Ireland by the English origi-

* Sir James Ware, *Antiquities*, p. 233.

nated in that lust of power which, since what we must consider its apostacy, has always characterized the Church of Rome; and the desire on the part of the English monarchs to maintain that authority, from which their own title originated, against the ancient habits of the people, and the privileges of their chiefs, gave occasion for much of the oppression, and those invidious distinctions which characterized the unhappy period during which the Romish Church and the English government ruled a small portion of Ireland, and carried on war against the remainder.

It is not a little singular, that the first relaxation of those severe enactments, which oppressed the Irish people and disgraced the Irish Statute Book, was made as soon as the Reformation was completed. In the third year of his reign, James I. issued a proclamation, declaring "that he received all the natives of Ireland into his protection;" and the common law of England became established in Ireland.* The Statute of the 11th, 12th, and 13th James I. cap. v.,† after recognizing that the natives of Ireland were for the most part in continual hostility with the English, and that in divers statutes they were called Irish enemies, being held in contempt, then goes on to repeal that

* Sir James Ware, Vol. II. p. 88.

† Irish Statutes, Vol. I.

which enacted that none should take merchandize to be sold among the Irish. Also that which enacted "that any person might take any Irishman found within the English border, and make of them as the king's enemies." Also that preventing any person fostering or marrying with the Irish. Now for the first time Ulster, with parts of Leinster and Connaught, saw lawyers taking their circuits of assize, and dispensing the comforts of English jurisprudence. Can any person read the provisions of the statutes which were repealed by this enactment, and not express astonishment at the spirit which sanctioned those provisions; and can we not recognise in their repeal a more intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures, from which is derived that religion which teaches us to be at peace with all men, and an approach to that charity which never faileth.

The Roman Catholic Irish are too apt to confound the wrongs which they suffered from England in a state of Popish ignorance with that blessed Reformation which first dictated a better policy arising from a more Christian spirit that commenced at the very dawn of the Reformation, and which has actuated this country ever since, if not without interruption, with only such as might be expected from the provocations which

unhappily too often originated with the Irish themselves.

The great rebellion, and the massacre of the Protestants in 1641, took place little more than thirty years after a Protestant Parliament, and a Protestant king had given their sanction to the beneficent provisions of this enactment; and here again it was the work of that foreign ecclesiastical power which would retain its authority by the same unhallowed means by which it had been acquired, and who took advantage of the unhappy circumstances in which Ireland was placed; for, as Mr. Phelan remarks, "it was beyond the reach of a proclamation to abolish the memory of old grievances; to make an Irish landlord contented with equal laws and a reasonable rent; and to appease the hungry and contentious expectancies which, by the usages of Tanistry and Gavelkind, were collected round an Irish property."

When we consider how remote is the origin of those ancient laws and institutions, to which there is reason to attribute the peculiar vices of the Irish character, we have occasion to wonder—not that in many respects they should shew a defective morality; but it excites our surprise that they should have been even partially reclaimed. For while their ancient laws were such

as to deprave the national character, the conduct of their conquerors, up to the period of the Reformation, was such as to maintain the habits which their early institutions had engendered.

The Irish have ever been remarkable for a disregard of human life, and a familiarity with the crime of homicide. Peter Walsh, a Franciscan friar, reports, in his prospect of Ireland under the Milesian kings: "Certainly, if not among cannibals, never has any other nation upon earth exceeded the Milesian race (inhabiting Ireland) in the most unnatural, bloody, everlasting, destructive feuds that have been heard, or can well be imagined." He says again: "The fury extended even to many ages of Christianity; or rather, indeed, in a very great measure to the whole extent or duration of their being a free people." And further: "Not even the greatest holiness of some of their very greatest and most justly celebrated saints, has been exempt from the fatality of this genius of putting their controversies to the bloody decision of battles." But no wonder that human life should be estimated so low, when, by the Brehon law, murders, rapes, and theft were punished only by a fine called *Erick*;—at so cheap a rate was human life estimated by the Irish lawgivers.* The Irish are, also, much

* Mr. Moore says, murder and rape were made capital offences.

wanting in reverence for the authority of government, which may have arisen from the uncertainty which attended the right of succession under the law of Tanistry, and the possibility that the Dynast might be deposed. Mr. Moore says, the Dynasts themselves being, from their position, both subjects and rulers, were by turns tyrants and slaves.

The successor of the Dynast or Chief was elected by the people, who generally chose the most powerful in followers and dependants, who was called the Tanist. The Tanist, and every kinsman of the Dynast, had lands allowed them; but they were removeable at the pleasure of the Dynasts. Sir James Ware remarks on this: "Where men have no fixed estates in their lands, which their issue or next relatives in blood may inherit, they are ignorant for whom they labour, and are therefore negligent in turning them to the best advantage." And again, "when they knew that their wives were not endowable, nor their issue inheritable, they committed crimes with the greater audacity."

The Irish have always shewn a great disregard

before the coming in of the English. If so, they must have relapsed into their former barbarous customs afterwards; for the Brehon laws were in force among the Irish in the time of Spenser and Sir John Davis.

to the rights of property, their own property was insecure, as the lowest Dynast or Chief was supported principally by some tributary exaction, called *coshering*; by which he quartered himself on the people against their consent, and without payment; and to this all lands, except those of the Church, were liable;* and the custom of the Irish, if possible, to divide their land among their children, and the effort which every man in Ireland makes to rise above his station, arises from the Irish law of Gavelkind, by which the land of the father was at his death divided among all the sons illegitimate as well as legitimate. From this custom, Sir James Ware says, “every one of the sons, though labouring under the most shameful poverty, looked upon himself as a gentleman, and disdained to exercise husbandry, merchandise, or any other mechanical art. Yet these poor gentlemen were so affected to their small portions of land, that they rather chose to live at home, by rapine, extortion, oppression, and coshering, than to seek more ample fortunes abroad.”—From thence the Septs increased.

It is curious with what distinctness we are able to trace the root of the habits of the Irish of the

* Sir James Ware.

present day, to customs and laws of such ancient date, and which have so long ceased to have any authority ; we not only now find them indifferent to the shedding of blood, and still, if possible, dividing their land, and clinging to the soil which will not afford them a maintenance ; but we even see the origin of that love which the Irish women bear to their foster children, in the custom of fostering, which, though it has now left its traces in an amiable exercise of human affection, was the fountain, our antiquarian informs us, of many evils, owing to the strange combinations and confederacies of factions in things lawful or unlawful, to which it gave rise ; and so, at the present day, when once the Irish have adopted a faction, they adhere to it with a strange pertinacity, and without any better reason than having once identified themselves with the cause.*

We find also that the Irish have great admiration for daring and lawless characters, which has also its origin in their ancient customs ; for Spenser, speaking of the Irish bards, says, “ Whomsoever they find to be most licentious of life, most bold and lawless in his daring, most

* Mr. Moore says, “ faction pervaded all ranks, from the hovel to the supreme throne.” Again, “ commotion and bloodshed were in those times the ordinary course of public affairs.”

dangerous and desperate in all parts of disobedience and rebellious dispositions, him they glorify in their rhythms, him they praise to the people, and to young men make an example to follow.” And, if such was the state of things under their Milesian kings and numerous dynasts, it was not much improved by the English conquest.

In addition to their internal dissensions, they were (as their designation of Irish enemies shews) at perpetual war with the English, whose system of government was not directed to conciliate them, though they did not think it worth while, till a late period, to subdue them; but while the English claimed a nominal sovereignty, they denied them the protection which is due in return for allegiance; on the contrary, we find a law allowing Irishmen, found as Espials among the English, to be made of as if the king’s enemies.

It is not necessary to go through the various degrading and harassing enactments which disgraced the statute book. One, by prohibiting commercial intercourse, excluded the Irish from such a connexion with their masters as might conciliate their regard, and would enable them to derive some benefit from their allegiance. But, in fact, an intercourse with the Irish was feared, as tending more to deteriorate the English colonists, than to improve the aboriginal inhabitants;

and there was no desire to retain their allegiance ; their exclusion from the English pale, and their gradual extinction, appearing to be the objects in view, till these obnoxious provisions were repealed by king James, when, as the first fruits of the Reformation, in the words of that beneficent statute, “All the inhabitants of this kingdom, without difference and distinction, are taken into his majesty’s gracious protection, and do now live under one law as dutiful subjects of our Lord and monarch.”* Nor did the beneficial influence of that charity which suffereth long, and is kind, stop here ; for, by the 10th and 11th of Charles I., it is provided, as the preamble says, “for abolition of destruction and difference between his majesty’s said dutiful subjects of the said realm of Ireland, and for the perpetual settling of peace and tranquillity among them,” that various statutes then in force, which made invidious distinctions between the English and Irish, should be repealed.

But, unfortunately, the beneficent intentions of the monarch and legislature were defeated ; for nine years after the passing this statute, the perpetual peace, which it was intended to promote, was interrupted by the rebellion and massacre of the Protestants in the year 1641.

*. Irish Statutes, James I.

We cannot be surprised if, after this bloody catastrophe, and the temper shewn by the Roman Catholic Parliament, assembled by King James II., that the Protestant government of Ireland should so far distrust their Roman Catholic subjects, as to enact what are called the penal laws, which, however, were not confined to Ireland, and were not more severe upon the Irish than the English. There was also, we must confess, a great deal of commercial jealousy shewn by England, which much retarded the improvement of both nations, and protracted the reign of barbarism among the Irish.

There was also much religious indifference among the Protestants of Ireland, from which their English brethren were not exempt. But still the Word of God was read weekly in their churches, and the Gospel, even then, often preached fully in the pulpits of the Church, while a Scriptural liturgy was read from the desk ; — alas ! not for the benefit of the mere Irish, but, at least, for all those who understood the English tongue. Compare, however, this state of things with what we are told was the state of the Church in 1515, just before the Reformation. “There is no archbishop, bishop, abbot, ne parson, ne vicar, ne any other person of the Church, high or low, greater or smaller, Englishe or Iryshe,

that useth to preach the Worde of God, saving the poor Fryers, beggars.” “Also the Churche of thys lande use not to lerne any other scyence but the law of canon.”* Can we be surprised that the same author should say, “what comyn folke, in all this world, is so pooer (poor), so feeble, so well besyn in toon and fylde, so bestyall, so greatly oppressed and trodden under foot, as the common folke of Ireland.”

However the Protestant clergy may, for a time, have come short of their duties,—however religion may have decayed there, as it did also at the same period in England,—the dereliction of duty was not to be compared with that charged against the Roman Catholic Church by one of her own members.

We have now seen, by a very hasty review, what was the state of Ireland under her Milesian kings, “when commotion and bloodshed” were the ordinary course of public affairs.”† We have seen Ireland, under Roman Catholic England, “oppressed and trodden under foote,” when she was characterised by “continuale warre, rite of hate and envye,” as a land in which “there never

* State Papers, Henry VIII., quoted in *Christian Examiner* for June 1835.

† Moore.

was more lybertie in vyceis, and less lybertie in virtue.’* We have seen her, after the Reformation, when all the inhabitants of this kingdom were “taken under his majesty’s protection,” and all distinctions and differences were abolished; but we have also seen that, by the old Milesian customs, habits were created which have not yet been eradicated; and by the iron rule of the English conquest Popery was riveted so effectually as to endanger that connexion between the two countries by which it was introduced.

But the people of Ireland having become prone to homicide by the indulgence of the Brehon laws, and habituated to it by the cruel policy of their Anglo-Roman conquerors, this evil disposition is still directed to advance their own objects by those who possess an influence over the more ignorant part of the population, so as to shew the truth of an old proverb, “the pryde of France, the treason of Ingland, and the warre of Ireland, shall never have ende.”†

The treason of England has now been dormant for many generations under the influence of a strict administration of justice. The people are attached to the constitution from which they derive security for capital, and its natural conse-

* State Papers, Henry VIII.

† Ibid.

quence, commercial and agricultural prosperity; and we trust these advantages will be secured by that which adds the blessing of God, a pure and Scriptural religion; and may not the wars of Ireland cease under the same influence? But habits have been created which, originating in such causes, are not to be easily changed; nor can a cure be effected, of so complete a moral derangement, by such remedies as have been proposed in modern times.

It is not by paying the Roman Catholic priests, that we are to create a regard for human life; it is not by the mere learning to read and write that we are to give a respect for the rights of property. It is not by giving increased civil privileges to those who are at present more ready to use those they possess blindly at the dictation of some favourite declaimer, than from a desire to benefit their country. It is not by severity towards Protestants, as a proof of impartiality towards Roman Catholics! It is not by such methods as these that the Irish character is to be improved; and a "liberty for virtue" given; and the "liberty for vice" restrained. No, it must be by a strict administration of justice, aided by a vigilant police. The recurrence of the evil habit must be prevented, in the first instance, which will restrain the commission of the overt act.

Evil must not be permitted even that good may come; the Irish must not be allowed to resist the payment of lawful demands, even by those who may think it expedient to change the application of the property in question. Justice must be administered with a strict impartiality; but it must always be kept in view, that the exercise of impartiality does not require that the religion of the party should be encouraged, but merely that it should be protected; however, it does require that that religion should be maintained, which was guaranteed by repeated Acts of Parliament, under the faith of which settlements were made, properties purchased, and essential rights surrendered.

If order can be preserved in Ireland by so reasonable a course of proceeding, much may afterwards be effected by other means; by giving protection to capital; by promoting commercial and agricultural prosperity; by good education, and especially by giving a knowledge of those Scriptures by which alone we are led not merely to what constitutes temporal happiness, but to those blessings which will never end; by which alone, under the blessing of God, that character is formed which peculiarly fits an individual conscientiously to perform all the relative duties of

life, and which, consequently, if general must constitute the happiness of a nation.

There is no time now, to go into all the minute questions which suggest themselves in considering the state of Ireland. Many other evils, to which she is subject, deserve to be reviewed ; and, if these could be removed, it would almost supersede those which arise out of the difference of religion.

It is desirable that the wide interval between the gentry and peasantry should be filled by a gradation such as exists in most parts of England, where it is difficult to say where one grade begins, and another ends ; though the extremes, and even many intermediate links, are separated by a considerable interval. If a similar state of society could take place in Ireland, the interests of the whole community would be so interwoven, that servile wars would be less frequent. It is also desirable that capital should be so largely invested in land, that the competition for farms might be less extensive ; and that the rent should be regulated, not only by the demand, but by the possibility of a beneficial investment. By these means, those who have an interest in preserving order, might be intermixed with those men by whom it is likely to be violated ; and a community of interest would be given to the

owners and occupiers of land, by both parties having something to lose ; and, in consequence, political agitation on subjects even the most interesting would have comparatively little effect, because it would threaten the prosperity of so many individuals in various classes.

The Protestants of Ireland are accused of struggling to regain what was called "Protestant ascendancy." Though this was, at one time, a popular toast in Ireland, few understood it so as to give the expression any definite meaning. At one time it may have meant the maintenance of the whole penal code ; and, in that sense, no enlightened Protestant of the present day would desire its re-establishment. It may have meant the exclusion of Roman Catholics from Parliament ; and the Protestants now know too well that is impracticable. But it may mean, and probably, in Mr. O'Connell's view, it does mean, the maintenance of the Protestant Church, guaranteed as it was at the Union. In this sense, the Protestants have a right to require the maintenance of Protestant ascendancy, and so far as it has been violated by a failure on the part of the late Government, to secure their property they have a right to struggle to prevent its recurrence. It may mean also that the government should be essentially Protestant, not that Roman Catholics should be

systematically excluded from all places of trust to which they may be qualified ; but that the government should be so constructed as to secure Protestant proprietors in the enjoyment of their properties, and the Protestant Church in the possession of its rights. Now even if these objects were not as just and reasonable as they appear to be, let us see how the government can be carried on upon any other principle.

If the member for Cork, and those who act with him, desire the annihilation of that essential part of the property of the Church of England and Ireland, which consists of Irish Tithes, without a fair and full substitute ; will they not use any power and influence which they may possess to effect that object ; and still more, was not an intention evinced to transfer some part of that property, or its equivalent, to the ministers of the Roman Catholic Church ? Could the government gratify them in this, and keep the good will and sincere co-operation of the Protestant gentry and Protestant people ?

The attempt has already been tried to gain the good will of the Roman Catholics, by a desire to shew impartiality to a degree which has appeared to the Protestants, especially to the clergy, as a partiality highly injurious to them, and the effort seems to have been utterly unavailing ; nay, it is

avowed that nothing short of a dissolution of the Union will avail to conciliate those who have in view the measure which the late government said was equivalent to the dismemberment of the Empire.

It is true that a hope is held out that instalments will be accepted ; but why ? because they advance the great object which is still in view and openly avowed. Was it not, then, hopeless to govern Ireland by the aid of those men who still entertain such designs ? if they do, they who make the attempt must have hoped either to make the supporters of the repeal of the Union their unconscious instruments (and the sagacity which these persons have shewn repudiates the idea), or they must have hoped to win them to their purpose ; and what could they hold out to them consistent with the good faith which is due to the Protestant Church and Protestant people, which would afford them an adequate object in giving the government their support ; and is there not something in the personal position of some of the supporters of repeal, as it is called, which almost makes it impossible for them to close with any objects of personal ambition ; they may give partial support to obtain apparently slight concessions ; but in such a war of manœuvring, a government must always lose ; it is on the defen-

sive ; therefore by every change something is gained by its adversary ; time, too, is everything to those who desire an important change ; the most monstrous propositions appear less formidable when we are familiar with them ; and the opponent of existing institutions always grows into power and importance ; especially when he appears to be successful.

Among the circumstances which make Ireland one of the most difficult countries in the world to deal with, we must particularly keep in view the variety, as well as the conflicting nature, of the motives which influence her population. We have there the principle of democracy not less active than in other countries, and aided by the spirit of enterprise which has always distinguished the natives of that country. We have the spirit of hostility to Protestants which grew out of the original hostility to England ; both these aggravated by a recollection of the property which has passed from the ancestors of the Irish to those who have descended from the English and Protestant settlers. These motives make them ready instruments to the priests who desire to re-establish the Romish hierarchy ; and this gives occasion to an opinion, that if you could satisfy the priests by giving them a provision, which would be a partial establishment of the Roman Catholic religion,

you would also quench the turbulent spirits who are now their instruments. We will leave out of consideration, in this place, the greatest difficulty, whether any consistent Protestant can consent that the State should contribute to support the Roman Catholic Church ; and we will further postpone another very important question, whether the government would be justified in giving authority to those, whose conduct is such as that attributed to the Roman Catholic priests, by one of themselves ; and we will only inquire as to the expediency of such a course. In the first place, what security will you have that the priest, even when a permanent provision has been made for him, will not still act on the superstitious fears of the people, as described by Mr. Croly, to extract as much more as he can from them ; and, in order to do so, he must favour, and not control, their unruly dispositions. In this way you will place in lawful authority, and provide with means sufficient to give them much power, men who are in no way under the authority of the government of the country.

Protestant clergymen are under the influence of the government, owing to the Church patronage of which the Crown is possessed, and they are responsible for their conduct to the ordinary tribunals of the country ; but it is the very essence of the Roman Catholic religion, that their

ecclesiastics are only responsible to ecclesiastical authority ; a Roman Catholic priest, if established, may act in the most criminal manner ; his superiors may decide in his favour, and if he is to be removed, the appeal, as a last resort, is to be to Rome. Is the Crown of England once more to sue at Rome for justice against one of its own subjects ? Can harmony be promoted by separating, as widely as possible, the civil and ecclesiastical authorities ? and would any wise man perpetuate such a system as that which Mr. Croly represents to prevail in the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland ?

It may be said, that to make a provision for the Roman Catholic clergy is the way to remove some of the evils which Mr. Croly describes, and they are stated by him for that purpose ; but it would be a desperate experiment : if it failed, the country would be involved in an act which a large part of the community consider highly reprehensible in a religious point of view ; and if it did accomplish its professed object, it would aggravate all the existing evils by giving permanence to the system, and authority and influence to those with whom it originates ; and be assured * it is much more

* A Work was published a few years ago, written by Mr. Cornwall Lewis, which advocates the payment of the Roman Catholic priests, and in which opinions are expressed which will at least

than doubtful whether you would satisfy the priests. They consider Protestantism a usurpation, and would never be satisfied with less than the

lead to the adoption of the voluntary principle. Mr. Lewis is of opinion, that to object to the encouragement, by the Legislature, of religious teachers, because the objector conscientiously believes their tenets are unscriptural and dangerous, will lead to the adoption of the same principles which caused the persecutions of the Duke of Alva, and which lighted the fires of the Inquisition. But he forgets that there may be a medium between abstaining from supporting a religion which we think to be wrong, and persecuting the followers of a religion from which we differ; we may refuse to spread the heresy without determining to murder the heretics, and so prevent even the possibility of Reformation. Mr. Lewis speaks of religious opinions as if they were identical with political parties; consequently he considers the one as having no higher obligation than the other. Now we are persuaded he will see, on reflection, that religious tenets must have a greater influence than any other opinions; but he will also find that any statesman or legislator will greatly miscalculate who does not expect men's religious opinions to have, in many instances, a supreme influence on their conduct. Mr. Lewis speaks of the danger, that men will consider themselves rather as Baptists and Roman Catholics than as Englishmen or Frenchmen, and that they will prefer the one course to the other. Now, if the question is only between Infant and Adult Baptism, they may not probably find their religious and civil obligations at variance. But Mr. Lewis may rest assured, that if any statesman was to place an undoubted religious obligation, clearly set out in Scripture, in an unhappy opposition to the duties of the citizen, he must expect to find many men who will prefer religious obligation to the civil, and, in so doing, they would only fulfil the injunction to obey God rather than men. It is true that men may believe they are serving God, when they are only gratifying their own passions; but in this, as in other instances, their persons must be made responsible for the obliquity of their understandings. Mr. Lewis's doctrine

restitution of all which they conceive belongs to them ; and, indeed, the See of Rome would sacrifice all its pretensions, if it could be satisfied with less. But if you did conciliate the secular priests, the friars would occupy their place in the affections of the people, and also in the direction of their turbulent spirits ; for the priests find, but do not create, though they use the disposition to disturbance which arises from other causes above stated.

Even if a stipendiary provision were made for

seems to be, that religion, which should influence a man sincerely in his closet, and supremely in the discharge of all his private obligations and relative duties, is to exercise no control over him in the performance of his public duties. But it seems difficult to conceive how we can consult Scripture as a rule of life in relation to our private concerns, and cast off all reference to its authority, when we have to act in a public capacity ; but if not, how can it be said that "the State is no judge of creeds, and views religion solely in their temporal character."* A community is, as he says, no really existent person ; but it is a number of persons, each of which individually must be influenced in his separate actions, by the opinions he forms of their tendency. If he thinks the promulgation of a particular form of religion to be so dangerous and so contrary to Scripture that he will not, as a master of a family, and as a father or brother, place those dependant on him under its influence ; is he, in his public capacity, to secure its being taught to thousands of his fellow creatures, for whose well being he is responsible as a member of the Government which should have a parental care of them, or as a legislator appointed to watch their interests.

the Roman Catholic clergy, it would not allay the spirit of democracy arising from the character of the times, or counteract the evil disposition which proceeds from the remembrance of the forfeited estates. In short, property, and therefore in some measure power, would still be on one side; numerical superiority, and a remembrance of being worsted in former contests, would be on the other.

The Repeal of the Union is a good rallying point, and a good note by which to urge on the war; but it can only be considered either as an excuse for agitation, or, if seriously contemplated, merely as a step, and it would be a very decided one to a much greater object and a much more tremendous change.

If a party is formed for the attainment of a particular object, and if they can assume even the appearance of controlling and influencing the proceedings of the government and the legislature, there is a high probability they will succeed in their ultimate object, however unreasonable or even mischievous it may appear at the time. The party by which it is promoted acquire resolution by partial success, while discussion makes the change appear less formidable.

Roman Catholic emancipation appeared hardly probable at the time of the Union; and subsequently it was impossible to resist it. And it is

curious to examine the means by which that measure was accomplished. For a time the administration was unanimous in opposition to the Roman Catholic claims; consequently, when it was attempted to set up the Roman Catholic association under another name, during the Vice-royalty of the late Duke of Richmond, he at once resolved to suppress it. His first attempt failed; but instead of giving way, he instantly ordered another prosecution, with greater precautions against a failure; and having succeeded, I believe no further attempt was made during his administration in Ireland. Subsequently the attempt to establish an association was repeated, and not being met by similar measures, it increased in importance and influence from the success with which it daringly resisted the government, till there was no alternative between concession, or the suppression of this formidable body which, from the increase of its number and powers, had become infinitely difficult. It appears to me as if a similar process was lately at work, in which the same elements existed, though not exactly in the same way, and leading to a similar result.

If the resistance to tithes had been successful, the attempt having been suggested by the advocate for the Repeal of the Union, it would have increased his merit, and, consequently, his in-

fluence with those who expected to benefit by the change. No gratitude would be felt towards any administration who would yield the point; for they might be thought to give an unwilling acquiescence, and at all events would be considered merely as converts who had tardily adopted the principle from him who first agitated the proposal; this would have led to events the most disastrous, and which now appear impossible to be accomplished. But not only does partial success lead to ultimate victory, but measures appear less formidable by constant discussion; and thus, whether they are good or bad, enemies are removed, and friends are ever gained.

In the year 1825 a reform in Parliament appeared more remote than ever, and so extensive a reform as that which has been accomplished, would have been thought quite a chimera at any time since that at which Mr. Pitt propounded the subject. That measure may realize all the hopes of its friends; but the most disastrous consequences which its opponents have prognosticated will appear nothing compared with the evils which will arise, when a Parliament is re-assembled in Dublin, to which the Commons will be returned by a constituency, of whom so large a proportion are Roman Catholics.

If it is urged in England that the House of

Lords should be forced into conformity with the Commons, what degree of pressure will be necessary to bring a Protestant House of Lords in Ireland, into conformity with such a House of Commons; and, when it is accomplished, to what lengths will the legislation of such a Parliament proceed? Can the £10 householders of England have desired reform with more intensity, or did they demand it with more urgency or more violent threats than those with which the constituency of Ireland will urge on their willing representatives every thing which may restore the Roman Catholic Church to what they consider its rights, and the Roman Catholic proprietors to their property?

What anarchy and uncertainty will all this create! What formidable authority will be exercised by the restored Roman Catholic Church and to this, English Dissenters, and even orthodox Dissenters, are lending their aid.

It is not a sufficient objection to say, that an opposition will be raised by the Roman Catholics who have become possessed of forfeited estates. They are comparatively few, and they are not those who will have most influence. They will be driven on by others, and by the interest of their Church; and the utmost they will obtain will be a compromise or compensation in some other direction.

But the Government of England should be especially careful in all their proceedings to preserve the identity of the Constitution, and by their moderation and caution they should avoid even the appearance of violating any positive right. It was by being guided by these principles that the Church of England acquired a greater stability than any other of the Reformed Churches; and the Constitution having been for near two centuries the glory of England and the admiration of the rest of the world, we have been accustomed till lately to think it impossible that any essential change, either in Church or State, could seriously be contemplated. And this, which so materially contributed to the peace of the country, and gave efficiency to our Institutions, may, under God, be attributed to the respect shewn both at the Reformation and the Revolution to positive authority and established rights. This ensured moderation, and prevented any unnecessary derangement of existing systems. There was no appeal to abstract and doubtful propositions, but always to real and tangible authorities. The Church, in the Convocations which were the National Councils, appealed to Holy Scripture as the only infallible authority in matters of faith. In matters of ceremony she merely required that nothing should be ordained "contrary to God's Word written;" and conse-

quently she respected both the rights and customs of antiquity, provided they were in no way controverted by Scriptural authority.

In the same manner, those concerned in the Revolution of 1688, violated the succession to the crown as little as they possibly could, consistently with the obligations which the unhappy circumstances of the times had imposed upon them. They assumed an abdication, from the flight of James II., and even gave credence to the story of an imposition at the birth of his son, to avoid the appearance of doing violence to those rights by which in fact the monarchy was prevented from becoming elective. So far as they succeeded they strengthened the government, and its feebleness at first may be traced to a partial failure. Their bill of rights was not like the French charter, an assertion of abstract justice, but an act declaratory of the existing Constitution.

Abstract principles are the frailest foundation possible for the purpose of raising a Constitution. There is no limit as to the extent to which they may be carried; and there is no construction by which they may be understood. Who understands the assertion that all power must flow from the people? In England some will tell you it is the £10 householders; others again will say it is every householder; others, that it is the mass

of the intelligent part of the population giving expression to their opinions in some measure according to the interest which they possess in the welfare of the country to which they belong. Again, who is agreed as to how the people are to delegate this power ?

It is asserted also that men are naturally equal. In one sense this is true ; in general it is practically and positively false. We are all equally impotent in infancy, and we all partake of an imperfect and erring nature, and we all depend on others ; but from the days of our first parents there has always been a positive and practical inequality which no power on earth can prevent. There has been the superiority of manual strength ; the superiority which industry will always acquire over indolence, which, by giving wealth and the power arising from the possession of capital, creates an influence which, if property is respected, may continue for many generations. In fact, the difference of rank, arising from the artificial construction of society, serves to mitigate, rather than to aggravate, these natural inequalities. Who would not prefer to bear the inferiority in which they may be placed by the Government of others, rather than submit to the arbitrary will of the strongest ? Who is there who does not feel that he is less humiliated by coming in contact with a superiority

created by birth, sometimes accompanied by that courtesy derived from a refinement of manners, rather than bear the supremacy of purse-proud arrogance?

The first French revolution is a specimen of legislation founded on abstract principles; and it is seen how speedily the rabble learnt the lesson taught by its philosophic founders, and how quickly did they interpret their maxims after their own fashion; and what a bloody record was left of the sovereignty of the people. At the second revolution they seem very imperfectly to have learnt the lesson which the first was calculated to afford. They scorned all acknowledgments of ancient rights; they would make their charter emanate from the people, and they who have required so much may demand more; whereas, if it had proceeded from the Crown, even if, like Magna Charta, it had been extorted, it would have the character of being final.

Again, the French admitted no right, when they elected the younger instead of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon; consequently they have asserted that the dynasty is elective, though the individual monarchs may reign by hereditary right, till a change is determined upon. Though the king can do no wrong, the Chamber of Deputies has deposed for one crime; and another (now

that they have determined that a whole dynasty may be cashiered for misconduct) may resolve that a much smaller offence may incur that penalty ; for this is the only species of treason left quite indefinite. As far as we can see, if anything can make the present order of things permanent in France, it will be, first, the recollection of the former revolution and the great ability of the monarch ; secondly, the proximity of the reigning family to the rightful succession.

Men are familiar with the idea of a right of succession, and can easily conceive how the throne is transmitted by the same obligations which conveys their property to their children ; but few know, and fewer consider, the abstract principles on which this modern species of Legislation has been founded ; they know, when a king has come in without a positive right, that they soon become familiarised with his imperfections, and they see no reason why he should not give place to another form of government which they think will meet their wishes better.

It is hoped that these observations are not misplaced. Many of the changes desired in the English and Irish Church have no precedent in English Legislation, and are founded on French theories or American practice ; the

Americans, at their revolution, did not disregard positive rights and existing authorities, and, so far, their institutions have had some permanence; but a vain philosophy was at work at that time, and has had so great an influence since, in that country, that Washington would hardly recognise the Constitution of which he was the founder. Whether the original merits of the American Constitution will eventually be able to withstand the tendency to innovation which also prevails, remains to be seen; and the question is, can democracy continually increase the power of those without property, and, consequently, perpetually diminish the influence of those who have property, and not produce anarchy? Can you give men the power of helping themselves to the fruits of their neighbour's industry, and be assured that they will have the moderation not to use it? The French Revolution, and the course of events in America, have made us familiar with violent changes; but if seriously considered, there is nothing attractive in the results.

Let us not risk the evils that may follow concessions which, however expedient they may appear to them, violate rights that have been at least treated as inviolate from the earliest times; let us not make a serious sacrifice upon merely the chance of a happy result.

There was some excuse for the first trial, on occasion of conceding Roman Catholic emancipation ; the promises then made were explicit, and the principal declarations of the parties were recorded before Committees of both Houses of Parliament in the most solemn manner ; and it was urged, in argument in the House, that they afforded ample security, as they went not merely to the extent, that the Church property should be inviolable ; but those who represented the Roman Catholic body before those Committees, gave it as their opinion, that it was not desirable that it should be interfered with. The experiment has failed. The parties now explain their declaration in a sense quite different from that in which it was then understood. The hopes now held out are by no means equally explicit ; it is merely suggested, that if the Church is sacrificed, the repeal of the Union may be suspended.

The real question is, will it be the interest of those who now agitate Ireland to yield, after such a concession ? I believe it will not be their interest, and it will not even be in their power ; the beginning of strife is said to be like the letting out of water ; this is true, and it is much more true in the case of civil strife, when you let go the flood-gates that restrain popular tumult, which is likely to ensue, when the multitude experience

that they have conquered, by being taught to set the law at defiance, and that they have gained by obliging the Legislature to sacrifice the rights of property, which ought to be inviolable, for the sake of a temporary expediency.

There is another consideration of still more serious obligation. While one branch of the Legislature is Protestant, and the same religion is professed by the majority of the two other branches (though they must not violate conscience, or attempt to coerce any man's judgment), yet it is their obvious duty to lead all the queen's subjects in the paths of true religion, and to provide religious worship and religious instruction for them in those tenets which the Government and the Legislature believe to be most for their temporal and everlasting welfare.

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